4.to

The Plough-mans Tale.

Shewing by the doctrine and liues of the Romish Clergie, that the Pope is Antichrist *and they his Ministers.*

Written by Sir *Geffrey Chaucer*, Knight, amongst his *Canterburie* tales: and now *set out apart from the rest, with a short exposition* of the words and matters, for the capacitie *and vnderstanding of the simpler* sort of Readers.

AT LONDON
Printed by G. E. for *Samuell Macham*, and *Mathew Cooke*, and are to be sold at their shop in Paules Church-yard, at the signe of the Tygers head. 1606.

A description of the *Plowman.*

With him there was a Plowman his brother,
That had iladd of dong many a fother:
A true swinker and a good was he,
Liuing in peace and perfit charitee:
God loued he best with all his heart,
At all times, though him gamed or smart:
And then his neighbours right as himselfe,
He would thresh, and thereto dike and delfe,
For Christs sake for euery poore wight,
Withouten hire, if it lay in his might.
His tithes paied he full faire and well,
Both of his proper swinke and his cattell.
In a Tabard he rode vpon a Mare,
There was also a Reue and a Millare,
A Sompnour and a Pardoner also,
A Manciple, and my selfe, there was no moe.

1. *A Ploughman his Brother*, hauing before giuen the parson great commendation for his painefull teaching of his people, both by life, and doctrine, bee makes this poore & honest Ploughman his brother, very tarlie with good *decorum*.

2. *Had I iladd*, He had loaden many a load of dung.

3. *A fother*, is properly a loade in cariage by land, a Tonne by water: namly 2000. waight that is 2240. pound, euery hūdred waight making 112. pound: it may seeme then beyond all likelyhood of truth, that *Chaucer* sayes the Temple of *Mars*, cost of gold largely a Fother, But we must vnderstand, that he speakes of tale, not of waight, as if he should haue said, it cost full 2000. or 2246. pound of money.

4. *True Swinker*: faithfull labourer of swinke labour.

5. *Though him gamed or smart*, whether he were in prosperitie or aduersitie, a *Metonymie*, of the effect or aduinct, for prosperitie is accompanied with ioy: and aduersitie with griefe, signified by smarting, which is one cause thereof.

6. *Dyke, and delfe*, ditch and delue, that is digge.

7. *If it lay in his might*, if it were in his power: he meanes not onely the strength of his body, but his businesse, and such other like occasions, by which if he were not hindred, he would ditch and delue for poore folkes without wages.

8. *Of his proper swinke*, both of the gaine, which came in by his day labour, and of the increase that arose by his Cattaile.

9. *A Tabard*, a sleeueless Iaquet, like an Heralds coate of Armes: as appeares by the very signe of the *Tabard* in Southwarke, an Inne, where *Chaucer* make the deuise of the *Caunterbury* tales, to haue bin moued and agreed on.

10. *A Mare*, a very good *decorum*; for we know that such country folke, keepe Mares rather then Horses or Geldings, because of breeding.

The Plowmans Prologue.

In the former editions of Chaucer. This Tale is made the last, but in the latter, set out by M. Spighte aduise, and commendable paine, it is the last saying, the Parsons Tale, I doubt not but this change is warranted by some olde coppies written, as the corrections also of diuers words: and it seemes to bee most reasonables that the Parsons Tale should bee the conclusion of their morning worke.

1.

THe Plowman plucked vp his plough,
Whē Midsummer Moone was comen in,
And said, his beasts should eat ynough,
And ligge in the grasse vp to the chin:
They been feeble both Oxe and Cowe,
Of hem nis left but bone and skin:
He shoke off shere, and coulter of drowe,
And honge his harnis on a pin.

1. *Plucked vp.* The Poet to signifie that the Ploughmā gaue ouer worke for that season, saies he plucked vp his plough: because in Ploughing hee keepes the Plough downe into the earth, that hee may make his furrowe to receiue the seede, when he leaues worke, especially for any time, he plucks vp his Plough.

2. *Plough*, so I read it rather then I low, because of the rime, whereof by and by.

3. *Beasts*, Oxen, by a Synechdoche, the generall being put for one speciall kinde, for all foure footed, and sometimes all creatures voide of reason, are signified by the name of beasts.

4. *Ynough*, In this worde we may obserue, that which is very rare in our tongue, if at all to be found, that it *enough*, whether we take it for a Nowne Adiectiue, or for an Aduerbe, hath difference of number, enough is referred to greatnesse or littlenesse, as meate enough, money enough: enow belonges to many or few, and is of the plurall number: as dishes enow, pounds enow, vnlesse (which is not likely) they be two diuers words. In this place therefore the word signifying quantitie, not number, must be enough, and not enow.

5. *Of hem nis left*. There is nothing but skione and bone left on them, *Nis ne is*, is not, *Hem*, them, as *Hee*, him, in the singular: and in olde written bookes, *Hy*, which is the *Saxon* word, for they, whence comes *Hem* and *Her*, for them and their.

6. *Shooke of*, he shooke off his plough share, it should seeme it was pind on, and the pinne being puld out, and the plough lifted vp, the share would easily be shaken off: Share so called, because it sheeres or cuts the ground.

7. *Coltre*, Culter in Latin is a Knife, which that peece of the plough resembles, as for vse, so almost for fashion to. *Drow*, drew: he puld the Culter off, or rather out of the mortice hoale in the beame where it is wedged in.

8. *Harneys*, the Chaines and yokes for the Oxen.

He

2.

He tooke his Tabard and his Staffe eke,
And on his head he ſet his hat:
And ſaied he would ſaint Thomas ſeeke,
On pilgrimage he goth forth plat:
In ſcrippe he bare both bread and leekes,
He was forſwonke and all forſwat,
Mē might haue ſeene throgh both his cheekes,
And euery wang tooth, and where it ſat.

1. *Plat*, flat plaine, that is, he goes directly on pilgrimage without ſtay or doubt.

2. *Forſwonke* & *forſwat*, ouerlabored and beſweated, the meaning is, that he did appeare to be a man that had taken ſore paines, and had much ſweate dried vpon him, which had tanned him, or made him tawny.

3. *VVang tooth*, The wanges are the great teeth, which in a dogge are calld fangs: *Chawcer*, addes tooth rather, for his verſe ſake, then any neceſſitie. His cheekes were ſo thin, that you might ſee the faſhion of euery great tooth, euen to the very rootes of it, the gummes being fallen in betwixt them.

3.

Our hoſte beheld well all about:
And ſaw this man was Sunne ybrent,
He knew well by his ſenged ſnout,
And by his clothes that were to rent,
He was a man wont to walke about,
He nas not alway in cloyſter ypent:
He could not religiouſliche lout,
And therefore was he fully ſhent.

1. *Bebe'd well all about*: either lookt euery waye about him, vpon the company to ſee whom he could ſpie, that had not as yet tolde his tale, or elſe lookt willy vpon the ploughman, and viewd him from top to toe.

2. *Ybrent*: Y, is added for the verſe. He ſaw that he was Sunne-burnt.

3. *Senged ſnout*: I and or Tawny viſage by *Synecdoche*: the ſnoute or noſe, being one part of the face, is put for the whole: that alſo is moſt ſubiect to ſunne-burning, becauſe it ſtands furtheſt out from the face, and ſo is leaſt ſhaded.

4. *To rent*: Ragged and torne; we now ſay all to rent or torne.

5. *Nas not*: ne was not, that is, was not: two negatiues, being vſed after the Greeke phraſe, where one might ſerue: it is very common in olde Engliſh Poets.

6. *Ypent*: ſhut vp, y added for the verſe, we now ſay to Pen: but our forefathers to pend: as part 2. ſect. 22.

7. *Religiouſliche lout*: bow or duck, as Friers or Religious men vſe to doe.

8. *Fully ſhent*: much blamed; perhaps it ſhould be, full ill ſhent, of the Verbe ſhend: as lent, of lend: and generally all Verbes of one ſyllable ending in en, or end, make the other tenſe, adding or changing d, into t. as bren, brent, pen, pent, ſend, ſent, lend, lent, but tend, of the Latin *tendo*, tended, and mend for amend, of the *French*, amender, amended.

Our hoſte him axed, what man art thou?
Sir (quoth he) I am an hine,
For I am wont to goe to plow,
And earne my meat ere that I dine:
To ſwette and ſwinke I make a uow,
My wife and children therewith to find,
And ſerue God and I wiſt how,
But we leaud men been full blind.

1. *Axed*, ſo they ſpake, and writte anciently, putting.s. after k. *Aks*, not before it *Ask*, as wee now doe for the moſt part.
2. *Hine*, Plough-man.
5. *A vow*, I vow to labour and ſweat, it is my profeſſion: borrowed from Friers and Monkes.
7. *Wiſt*, knew.
8. *Leaud*, vnlearned, not as we now vſe the word, wicked.

5.

For clerkes ſay we ſhullen be faine
For her liuelood ſwette and ſwinke,
And they right nought vs giue againe,
Neither to eate, ne yet to drinke:
They mowe by law, as they faine,
Vs curſe and damne to hell brinke,
Thus they putten vs to paine
With candles queint, and bels clinke.

1. *Shullen be faine*, either ſhould bee glad, or ſhall doe it whether we will or no.
2. *Lyuelood*, liuing: Clergie men ſay that wee ſhould be glad to labour for their liuing, and to ſweate for it.
3. *Right nought*, nothing at all.
5. *They mowe*, may or might.
8. *Candles queint*, candles quenched: by putting out of candles, ſignifying that the light of him whom they curſe, is put out.
8. *Bells clinke*, ſound or tinckling of bells, a word made of the ſound.

6.

They make vs thrals at her luſt,
And faine we mow not els be ſaued:
They haue the corne, and we the duſt,
Who ſpeakes thereagaine, they ſay he raued.
What man (qd. our hoſt) canſt thou preach?
Come neere and tell vs ſome holy thing:
Sir (quoth he) I heard ones teach
A prieſt in pulpit a good preaching.

1. *Thralls*, ſlaues, and bond, namely, by keeping the people in ſuch ſeruile feare.
1. *At her luſt*, at their pleaſure.
2. *They haue the corne*, of ſuch ſhepheards ſpeakes maiſter *Spencer* in his Kalender.

Say on (quoth our hoſt) I thee beſeech:
Sir, I am ready at your bidding:
I pray you that no man me reproch
While that I am my tale telling.

The Plowmans Tale.

A complaint againſt the pride and couetouſneſſe of the Clergie: made no doubt by Chawcer, *with the reſt of the Tales. For I haue ſeene it in written hand in* Iohn Stowes *Librarie, in a booke of ſuch antiquitie, as ſeemeth to haue been written neare to* Chawcers *time.*

1

ASterne ſtrife is ſtirred new,
In many ſteedes in a ſtound,
Of ſundry ſeeds that ben ſew,
It ſeemeth that ſome been vnſoūd:
For ſome be great growne on ground,
Some been ſoukle, ſimple and ſmall,
Whether of hem is falſer found,
The falſer foule mote him befall.

1. *Sterne*, ſtrife, ſharpe contention.
2. *Is ſtirred new*, is ſtirred now of late.
3. *Steeds*, places.
4. *In a ſtound*, on a ſond time.
5. *Sew*, ſowen.
6. *Vnground*, either it ſhould be on ground, or vpon the ground, or els he addes vnground, to ſhew the greatneſſe of them.
7. *Soukle*, poore and thin.
8. *Mote him befall*, euill might the falſer of theſe two kinde of ſeed fare.

2.

That one ſide is, that I of tell,
Popes, Cardinals, and Prelates,
Parſons, Monkes, and Freres fell,
Priours, Abbots, of great eſtates:
Of heauen and hell they keepe the yates,
And Peters ſucceſſours they been all,
This is deemed by old dates,
But falſhed foule mote it befall.

1. *That one ſide*, the one ſide that I tell of, is Popes, K.
2. *Freres fell*, *frere brother*, expreſſes the Latin father. *fell*, cruell.
3. *This is deemed*, this is iudged or determined by old records, his meaning is thus, it hath been thought, time out of minde.

The

The other side ben poore and pale,
And people put out of preasse,
And seeme catiffes sore a cale,
And euer in one without encreasse,
Icleped lollers and londlese:
Who toteth on hem they ben vntall
They ben araied all for the peace,
But falshed foule mote it befall.

1. *Out of preasse.* Thrift out of the company of men, as not worthy to liue amongst men.

2. *Catyffes*, wretches.

3. *Sore a cale*: much pinched with miserie, colde and hunger.

4. *Euer in one*, alwayes alike, without any preferment.

5. *Icl-ped*: cleped, called, *Lollers*: the true Christians which either seuered themselues from popish idolatry and abhomination, or were knowne to misslike of them, were called *Lollers*: as if they had been but weeds in the Church. if that be the deriuation of the word, it should be written with one L. *Lolers*, for *lo*, in *lolium*, is short, as appeares by that verse of Virgil: *Infelix lolium & steriles dominantur auenæ*. See maister *Spights* notes.

6. *Londlese*, Landlesse, without land; hauing not such possessions and liuings as the Friars and monkes haue, so the Protestants in the Lowe-countries, were called *Gen.* poore people, and some Christians in *France* heretofore, poore men of *Lyons*. They are afterward said to haue bin without land.

7. *Who toteth on hem*: who lookes on them, shall see they are lowe, weake, poore.

8. *All for the peace*: they are wholy prepared for peace, attired as men of peace.

4.

Many a countrey haue I sought,
To know the falser of the two:
But euer my trauaile was for nought,
All so ferre as I haue go.
But as I wandred in a wro,
In a wood beside a wall,
Two foules saw I sitten tho
The falser foule mote him befall.

1. *For nought*: in vaine.

2. *All so ferre*: as farre, as I haue gone though I trauell so farre, all was in vaine.

3. *In a wro*: In griefe or anger, as I trauaild from place to place, grieued, that I could not learne the truth of this matter.

4. *A wall*: that is, as I take it, a well: for woods vse not to be walled: and in this tale afterward, wall is put for well; As bucket into the wall.

5. *Tho*, then.

6. *Foule mote*: Foule mote befall the falser, foule must not be ioyned with falser, but with befall, the foule euill take the falser of them.

That

5.

That one did plete on the Popes ſide
A Griffon of a grimme ſtature,
A Pellicane withouten pride
To theſe lollers laied his lure:
He muſed his matter in meaſure,
To counſale Chriſt euer gan he call:
The Griffon ſhewed as ſharpe as fyre.
But falſhed foule mote it befall.

1. *Layd his lure*, caſt his liking, or his perſwading, ſpake for theſe Lolers.

2. *Muſed his matter*: He ranged his matter in good order.

3. *To counſaile*: Hee alwayes called Chriſt to his counſule, that is, he proued his matters by our Sauiour Chriſts authoritie, out of the Scriptures.

6.

The Pellicane began to preach
Both of mercie and of meekeneſſe:
And ſaied that Chriſt ſo gan vs teach,
And meeke and merciable gan bleſſe:
The Euangely beareth witneſſe,
A lambe he likeneth Chriſt ouer all,
In tokening that he meekeſt was,
Sith pride was out of heauen fall.

1. *Merciable*: Merciſull.

2. *Euangely*, Euangill, Goſpell, or rather Euangeliſt, becauſe in the next verſe, *He likeneth*.

2. *A Lambe he likeneth*: Hee that is the Euangeliſt, meaning eſpecially *Iohn* likens Chriſt to a Lambe, ouer all; eſpecially aboue all things.

3. *In tokening*: In ſignification, (or as we now ſpeake) in token that he was verie meeke.

4. *Sith pride was*. Eyther becauſe pride was, &c. or long ſince pride was fallen out of heauen.

7.

And ſo ſhould euery Chriſtened be:
Prieſts, Peters ſucceſſours
Both lowliche and of low degree,
And vſen none earthly honours:
Neither croune, ne curious couetours,
Ne pillour, ne other proud pall,
Ne nought to cofren vp great treaſours,
For falſhed foule mote it befall.

1. *Euery Chriſtened*: Euery Chriſtian, or euery man that is chriſtned.

2. *Prieſts*, Yea Prieſts, and Peters ſucceſſours; ſo is the verſe and the ſenſe more perfect, euen prieſts and Biſhops, with the Pope himſelfe muſt be lowly.

3. *Curious couetours*: I thinke it ſhould be, couertures, of couering: and then the meaning

meaning is that they should not haue cloakes of estate, and Cannapies, curiously wrought to couer themselues with.

4. *Pillour*: a Pillor is one of the ensignes or markes which is vsually carried before Cardinals, to signifie that they forsooth are Pillars of the Church.

5. *Pall*: of the Latin *pallium*: it is an attire belonging properly to Archbishops, and must be had new for euery Archbishop from Rome, at a deare rate: by their superstitious order, it should be made of the wooll of one of those two Lambes, which on S. *Agnes* day being laid vpon the high Altar, in Saint *Peters* church, are after this hallowing of them, committed to the Subdeacons of that Church, and kept by them in a pasture appointed. The whole garment is not made of that woll, but only that list or plate of it which falles downe before and behinde, and compasseth the neck about.

6. *Cofer vp*: lay vp in their cofer.

8.

1. *Priests should for*: priests should not goe to law with their parishoners for tithe of cattell, but should charitablie admonish and reproue them.

Priests should for no cattell plede,
But chasten hem in charite:
Ne to no battaile should men lede,
For inhaunsing of her owne degree.
Nat wilne sittings in high see,
Ne soueraignty in hous ne hall,
All worldly worship defie and flee:
For who willeth highnes, foule shall fall.

2. *Ne to battaile*: Nor should make warre, as diuers popes haue done, for the aduancing of their owne honour.

3. *Nat willen sitting*: they should not be desirous to sit in places of great estate and gouernment, nor to haue soueraigne commaund in pallaces and places of iudgment, or in goodly houses and halles where many people assemble.

9.

1. *Alas who may*: Who may call such men saints as desire to rule or beare sway with earthly honor.

Alas who may such saints call,
That wilneth welde earthly honour:
As low as Lucifer such shall fall
In balefull blackneſſe to builden her boure,
That eggeth the people to errour,
And maketh them to hem thrall:
To Christ I hold such one traitour,
As low as Lucifer such one shal fall.

2. *In balefull blackneſſe*: They shall haue their dwelling in sorrowfull darkneſſe.

3. *Eggeth*: prouoketh the people to erre, either for knowledge or carriage.

4. *To Christ I hold*: I accoumpt such a man a traitor to Christ.

That

10.

That willeth to be kings peeres,
And higher than the Emperour:
And ſome that were but poore Freres,
Now wollen waxe a warriour.
God is not her gouernour,
That holdeth no man his permagall,
While couetiſe is her counſailour,
All ſuch falſhed mote need fall.

1. *Kings peeres*: That deſire to be equall to Kings.
2. *Some that were*: ſome man of them that were but poore Freres will waxe a warriour.
3. *That holdeth*: That accompts no man his equall, as the pope does.
4. *While couetiſe*: as long as couetouſneſſe is their counſellor.

11.

That high on horſe willeth ride
In glitterande gold of great array,
Ipainted and portred all in pride,
No common knight may go ſo gay:
Chaunge of clothing euery day,
With golden girdles great and ſmall,
As boiſtous as is Beare at bay,
All ſuch falſhed mote need fall.

1. *Glitterand gold*: glittering golde of chargeable attire, painted and portraied, imbroidred with diuers deuiſes.
2. *As boiſtous*: with girdles of gold maſſie and ſtrong, as it were a chaine, to holde a Beare to a ſtake withall, that he may not breake away.

12.

With pride puniſheth they the poore,
And ſome they ſuſtaine with ſale,
Of holy church make they an hore,
And filleth her wombe with wine and ale:
With money fill they many a male,
And chaffren churches when they fall,
And telleth the people a leaud tale,
Such falſe faitours foule hem befall.

1. *With pride*: They puniſh the poore, proudly, and diſdainfully.
2. *Some they ſuſtaine*: ſome other that are able to bribe them, they vpholde in their lewdneſſe:
3. *Of holy Church*: They make holye church a whore, to be hired for money.
4. *Chaffren Churches*: buy Church liuings and preferments.
5. *Faytours*: Deceiuers, cooſeners.

With change of many manner meates,
With ſong and ſolas ſitting long,
And filleth her wombe, and faſt fretes,
And from the meat to the gong:
And after meat with harpe and ſong.
And each man mote hem Lords call,
And hote ſpices euer among,
Such falſe faitours foule hem fall.

1. *Faſt fretes*, chafe a pace.
2. *Gong*: priuie: whence gong fermer.
2. *Hote ſpices euer among*: alwayes hote ſpices in their meates and drinke.

14.

And miters mo than one or two,
Ipearled as the Queenes head:
A ſtaffe of gold, and perrie lo,
As heauie as it were made of lead,
With cloth of gold both new and redde,
With glitterande gold as greene as gall:
By dome they damne men to dedde,
All ſuch faitours foule hem fall.

1. *Ipearled*, perled, ſet with pearles, as the ſigne of the Queenes head is.
2. *A ſtaffe*: The Biſhops Croſyer or ſheephooke: of gold and pearle, and precious ſtone.
3. *As greene as gall*: the moiſture in the gall of liuing creatures is greene: it ſhould ſeeme he meanes that the gold is enamiled with greene.
4. *By dome they damne*: By iudgment or ſentence, they will condemne mē to death.

15.

And Chriſts people proudly curſe,
With broad boke, and braying bell:
To put pennies in her purſe,
They wol ſell both heauen and hell,
And in her ſentence and thou wilt dwell,
They willen geſſe in her gay hall,
And thou the ſooth of hem will tell,
In great curſing ſhalt thou fall.

1. *Braying bell*: Sounding bell: before wee had Bels clinck, to bray, is properly *Rudere*, to crie as an Aſſe does.
2. *And in her ſentence*: Perhaps hee meanes, if thou wilt like of their ſentence, and ſtand to it, they will entertaine thee as a gueſt in their braue halles: or elſe they will here and end thy matter, without any great enquirie, priuately in their houſes.
3. *Though the ſooth*. But if thou ſpeake againſt them, though neuer ſo truly, thou ſhalt come vnder their heauie curſe.

That

16.

That is bleſſed, that they bleſſe,
And curſed that they curſe woll:
And thus the people they oppreſſe,
And haue their lordſhips at full.
And many be marchants of wull,
And to purſe pennies woll come thrall:
The poore people they all to pull,
Such falſe faitours foule hem fall.

1. *Will come Thrall:* will become ſlaues to get money: as if they cared not how baſely they delt, ſo they might put money in their purſes.
2. *The poore people:* they fleece the poore people, & as it were pluck of their wool.

17.

Lords alſo mote to hem loute,
Obeyſant to her brode bleſſing.
They riden with her royall route
On a courſer, as it were a King,
With ſaddle of gold glittering,
With curious harneis quaintly crall it,
Stirrops gay of gold maſtling,
All ſuch falſhed foule befall it.

1. *Lords mote to hem:* Lords muſt do them reuerence falling downe obediently to their bleſſing, when they bleſſe the people on euery ſide.
2. *With curious harneis:* with curious furniture daintily engrauen: ſtrangely

not after any ordinary manner or workemanſhip.
3. *Gold maſtling:* Gliſtring gold.

18.

Chriſts miniſters clepen they beene,
And rulen all in robberie:
But Antichriſt they ſeruen clene,
Attired all in tyrannie:
Witneſſe of Iohns prophecie,
That Antichriſt is her admirall,
Tiffelers attired in trecherie,
All ſuch faitours foule hem fall.

1. *Chriſts Miniſters:* They are called Chriſts miniſters or ſeruants: but they ſerue Antichriſt altogether, cleane, as if there were nothing in their ſeruice, but that which is belonging and fitting for Antichriſt.
2. *Attyred all:*

wholy clothed with cruelty, giuen to cruelty.
3. *Tiffelers attyred:* Triflers, giuen to treacherie, and falſe dealing.

1. *Whoso saith*: whosoeuer sayes, that any of thē may sinne, shal be iudged to death.

Who saith, that some of hem may sinne,
He shall be dome to be ded:
Some of hem woll gladly winne
All ayenst that which God forbed:
All holiest they clepen her head,
That of her rule is regall:
Alas that euer they eaten bread,
For all such falshed wol foule fall.

2. *Some of hem*: some of them would with all their heart, thriue by such courses, as God hath forbidden men to followe.

3. *All holiest*: They call their head most holy: who is of Kingly or Soueraigne authoritie.

20.

1. *Coure*: crouch.

2. *To the Apostles*: That which Christ forbad the Apostles, Christ forbad the Apostles, to let any man kneele or crouch to him.

3. *To Popes hests*: such men regard the popes decrees, more then Christs commandements.

Her head loueth all honour,
And to be worshipped in word and dede,
Kings mote to hem kneele and coure,
To the Apostles that Christ forbede.
To Popes hestes such takeh more hede,
Than to keepe Christs commandement:
Of gold and siluer mote been her wede,
They holdeth him hole omnipotent.

4. *Of gold and siluer*: Their apparell must be of gold and siluer.

5. *They holdeth him*: They accompt the Pope wholy Almightie.

21.

1. *He ordaineth*: The pope giues a parish priest one kinde of power: expresseth the Latin in their letters of orders, *facultatem*: licence to execute their ministery thus, or thus farre.

He ordaineth by his ordinance
To parish priests a powere:
To another a greater auance,
A greater point to his mistere.
But for he is highest in earth here,
To him reserues he many a point:
But to Christ that hath no pere,
Reseues he neither o pin ne ioint.

2. *To another*: to another of his Cleargie he giues a greater aduancement or power.

3. *A greater point*: and yet a higher degree of power to some speciall minister or seruant, whom he does employ, as to his Legate a latere. The meaning is, that the

pope

pope deuides the power, that he saith God hath giuen to his ministers, diuersly as pleases himselfe, some to this man, some to that man, as for hearing confessions, and giuing absolution, enioyning of penance, and such like.

4. *But for he is highest on earth:* One man may giue absolution for such, or such sinnes. an other man for such one'y: but because the pope himselfe is highest here on earth, he reserues many points of that power, which he sayes the Church hath to himselfe onely.

5. *But to Christ:* He reserues nothing to Christ, who yet is without any partner or equall.

6. *O pin, ne ioint:* One pin nor ioynt, perhaps it is for vote, else it is a metaphor, taken from building, where in pins and ioynts are the smalleft things.

22.

So seemeth he aboue all,
And Christ aboue him nothing:
When he sitteth in his stall,
He damneth and saueth as him thinke.
Such pride tofore God doth stinke:
An angell bad Iohn to him not knele,
But onely to God doe his bowing,
Such willers of worship must need euill feele.

1. *Damneth:* condemns and saues whom he thinkes good.

2. *Euill fell:* either fell is for fall, as the rime requires, or else it is for feeling.

3 *Willers of worship:* they that so desire worship, shall feele some hurt or euill.

4. *To God doe his bowing:* bowe downe to God onely, or doe GOD onely worship.

23.

They ne clepen Christ, but sanctus Deus,
And clepen her head Sanctissimus:
They that such a sect sewis,
I trowe they taken hem amisse:
In earth here they haue her blisse,
Her high maister is Belial.
Christes people from hem wisse,
For all such false will foule fall.

1. *They ne clepen:* They cal Christ but holy God: but they call their head, most holy, yea, as if holinesse were proper to and from him communicated in measure to all other, as honour is from princes to their subiects, they say of the pope his holinesse, as of a Prince his maiestie: as if holinesse were inuested in the Popes person, as authoritie and honour is in the princes.

2. *Sewys:* follow.

3. *I trowe they:* I beleeue they mistake the right way.

4. *In earth here:* They haue their felicitie or happineſſe here in earth.
5. *Her high Maiſter:* The diuell is their chiefe Lord and maiſter.
6. *Chriſts people from hem:* Warne Chriſts people to keepe away from them:

24

1. *They mow both binde:* They may binde & looſe, they are ſo holy.
2. *With a Knif:* one kinde of weapon put for an other · Knife for Sword.
3. *To weete which of hem,* many a mā is ſlaine, that it may

They mowe both binde and loſe,
And all is for her holy life:
To ſaue or damne they mow choſe,
Betweene hem now is great ſtriſe.
Many a man is killed with knife,
To wete which of hem haue lordſhip ſhall,
For ſuch Chriſt ſuffred wounds fiue.
For all ſuch falſhed will foule fall.

be knowne whether of them that claime the Popedome, ſhall haue the Lordſhip or gouernment.

4. *For ſuch Chriſt:* Either we muſt read it with an interrogation: did Chriſt ſuffer fiue wounds for ſuch kinde of men? referring it to the Pope: or elſe we muſt vnderſtand it of the Chriſtians, that are ſlaine in theſe warres betwixt the Popes, as who would ſay: They that are ſlaine in theſe quarrels, are ſuch as Chriſt dyed for, and therefore they ſhould be more regarded.

25.

1. *Qui gladio percutit:* He that ſmites with ſword.
2. *He bad his prieſts:* Hee commanded his Prieſts to ſeeke for peace and truth.
3. *Simple and ſlie.* Simple as Doues, and wiſe as Serpents.

Chriſt ſaid: *Qui gladio percutit,*
With ſwerd ſurely he ſhall die;
He bad his Prieſts peace and grith,
And bad hem not drede for to die.
And bad them be both ſimple and ſlie,
And carke not for no cattell,
And truſteth on God that ſitteth on hie,
For all falſe ſhall full foule fall.

4. *Carke not for no:* Take no thought for the things of this world, but put thy truſt in God that is in heauen.

1. *Theſe wollen:* They will make mē take an oth: where there is no need of any ſuch Tryall, which is againſt

Theſe wollen make men to ſwere
Ayenſt Chriſtes commaundement:
And Chriſts members all to tere,
On roode, as he were new yrent.

Such

Such lawes they maken by common assent:
Each one it throweth as a ball,
Thus the poore be fully shent,
But euer falshed foule it befall.

Christs commandement, who charges all men to vse others with great reuerēce, in matters of necessitie, and not otherwise.

See *Chaucers* Testament of Loue. lib. 1. fol. 278.

2. *All to tere*: they teare Christs members in peeces, as if hee were now a fresh wounded and mangled on the crosse.

3. *Each one it throweth as a Ball*: Euery one of these Clergie-men, take and throw the lawes vp and downe like a Ball, as if they were but matters of sport.

27.

They vsen no simonie,
But sellen churches and priories:
Ne they vsen no enuie,
But cursen all hem contraries,
And hireth men by dayes and yeares,
With strength to hold hem in her stall:
And culleth all her aduersaries,
Therefore falshed foule thou fall.

1. *But cursen all*: They are not enuious against any mā, but they curse all that withstand or gainesay them.

2. *To hold hem*: They hire Souldiers and other men, to keepe them in their places and liuings from yeare to yeare, by fine force.

3. *Culleth all her aduersaries*: Pluck out and driue away all that are against them.

28.

With purse they purchase personage,
With purse they paynen hem to plede,
And men of warre they woll wage
To bring her enemies to the dede:
And lords liues they woll lede,
And much take, and giue but small.
But he it so get, from it shall shede,
And make such false right foule fall.

1. *With purse they paynen*: They hire men with money to plead and fight for them, that they may kill their enemies.

2. *But he it so get*: He that so gets his goods, shall soone loose them: shall shede, that is shall fall away from them.

3. *And make such false*: Perhaps it should be *such false right, foule shall fall*:

29.

They halow nothing but for hire
Church, ne font, ne vestement,
And make orders in euery shire,

1. *But Priests pay*: They giue orders, whereby men become Priests, but they pay dearely

for it, that are ordered priests by them.

But priests pay for the parchment.
Of riotours they taken rent,
Therewith they smere the shepes skall:
For many churches ben oft suspent,
And all such falshed foule it fall.

2. *Of Riotours*: They take a yearely rent (as the Pope does, of his curtizans 20000. Duckets yearely of men and women that liue in filthinesse, and for that they slubber ouer their matters, salueing, that is, annointing their sores, their sinnes: as if their absolution healed them.

30.

1. *Haunten*: ordinarily vse the company.
2. *Putree*. *Putinarie*, French fornication: The speech is growne into a Prouerbe, to punish a man for putry.

Some liueth not in lecherie,
But haunten wenches, widowes, and wiues,
And punisheth the poore for putree.
Them selfe it vseth all their liues:
And but a man to them him shriues,
To heauen come he neuer shall,
He shall be cursed as he caitiues,
To hell they saine that he shall fall.

31.

1. *Maximin*, & *Nero*, were two persecuting, and tyrannicall Emperours.
2. *His furred hood*: When he is in his robes, to sit in iudgment, whereof a whood furred with miniuer is part.
3. *They follow Christ*: They follow Christ, in the way to heauen-ward, as a Bucket into the Well: he shed his blood for his sheepe, they fleese and kill the sheepe, so that they take a quite contrarie way to Christs course, euen as the Bucket, that goes downward in a contrary way to heauen, which is vpward.
3. *Such wretches*: Such wicked men are worse then madde.

There was more mercy in *Maximian*,
And in *Nero*, that neuer was good,
Than is now in some of them,
When he hath on his furred hood.
They follow Christ that shed his blood
To heauen, as buckette into the wall:
Such wretches ben worse than wood,
And all such faitours foule hem fall.

They

They giue her almes to the riche,
To mainteinours, and men of lawe:
For to Lords they woll be liche,
An hatlots sonne not worth an hawe,
Sothfastnesse all such han slawe:
They kembe her crokettes with christall,
And drede of God they haue doune drawe,
All such faitours foule hem fall.

1. *To mainteinours:* To them that may mayntaine them, eyther by crafty pleading for them, or by force and authoritie.

2. *For to Lords:* For they will bee equall, like to Lords, though they be the sonnes of neuer so meane people: as Cardinall *Wolsey* was a Butchers sonne of *Ipsw ich*: See *Pierce Ploughmans* Creede of this point: *Now mote eche soutere his sonne setten to Schoole.*

3. *Sothfastnesse:* Such men haue slaine truth.
4. *They kembe:* They combe their locks with christall combes.
5. *And drede of God:* They haue pulled downe the feare of God.

33.

They maken parsons for the pennie,
And Canons, and her Cardinals,
Vnnethes amonges hem all is any,
That he ne hath glosed the gospell fals.
For Christ made neuer no Cathedrals,
Ne with him was no Cardinall,
With a redde hatte as vsen minstrals.
But falshed foule mote it befall.

1. *Vnnethes:* There is scarse any one amongst them, that hath not falsely expounded the Gospell.

34.

Their tithing, and her offering both,
They clemeth it by possession,
Thereof nil they none forgo,
But robben men as raunsome.

1. *Their Tithing:* They claime their titles and offrings, as their proper possession.

2. *Thereof will:* They will loose none of their tithes or offrings, but rob men of them, as if it were due to them, as the ransome of a man. He alludes to that place of *Num.*1.47.& 3.40. &c. Where God sayes, that all the first borne were due to him and his seruice in the Tabernacle, but that it pleased his maiestie to take the *Lewites* in their stead, and to ransome them at a certaine price.

The tithing of *Turpe lucrum*
With these maisters is veniall,
Tithing of brybry, and larson
Will make falshood full foule to fall.

3. *The tithing of:* the tithe of filthie gaine, is but a veniall matter with them, as if it were a sinne easie to be pardoned.

4. *Tithing of Bribry:* Taking tithe of bribery and theft, *viz.* absoluing of them, or at least receiuing tith of them, that get by bribery and deceipt.

35.

1. *They taken to ferme:* They let the Somnership out to ferme: They ferme out the office of sommoning men to their courts.

They taken to ferme her sompnours,
To harme the people what they may:
To pardoners, and false faitours
Sell her seales I dare well say:
And all to holden great aray,

2. *To Pardoners:* they sell their seales to pardoners: popish Bishops haue authoritie to graunt pardons in their Dioceese, which for money they sell to pardoners.

To multiply hem more metall,
They drede full little domes day,
When all such falshed shall foule fall.

3. *And all to bolden:* and all this they do, that they may be able to keepe a great port.

4. *To multiply hem:* To bring them in more siluer and gold, first metall *Metalepsis*, the generall word for siluer and gold, then siluer and gold for money coyned.

36.

1. *Such harlottes shull:* Such paltrye companions shall raise slaunders on men, that they may driue them to some agreement.

Such harlottes shul men disclaunder,
For they shullen make hem gree:
And ben as proude as Alexander,
And saine to the poore, woe be ye.

2. *By yere eche Priest:* Euery priest shall pay the Bishop a yearely rent, that he may freely keepe a queane.

By yere eche Priest shall pay his fee,
To encrease his lemmans call:
Such heerdes shul wel iuel thee,
And all such false shul foule fall.

3. *Such heards shall:* Such keepers or gouernours shall thriue ill,

And

37.

And if a man be falſely famed,
And wol make purgatioun,
Than woll the Officers be agramed,
And aſſigne him fro toune to toun:
So need he muſt pay raunſome,
Though he be clene, as is Chriſtall,
And then haue an abſolution,
But al ſuch falſe ſhull foule fall.

1. *And if a man:* Haue a ſlander raiſd of him, and would cleare himſelfe of it by triall, the officers of the courts will be diſpleaſed, and put him off from time to time, appointing him to appeare now at this towne, then at that towne, ſo that there is no remedy but he muſt needs pay the fees of the court, though he be neuer ſo cleare in the matter.

38.

Though he be giltie of the dede,
And that he may money paie,
Al the while his purſe wol blede,
He may vſe it fro day to day:
The Biſhops officers gone ful gay,
And this game they vſen ouer al,
The poore to pill is al their pray.
All ſuch falſe ſhul foule fall.

1. *Though hee bee guilty:* Let him bee neuer ſo guilty, if he be well monyed, as long as his purſe wil yeeld any money, he may continue in his wickednesſe.

2. *And this game:* And they vſe this ſport aboue al other towards all men, to make them pay by one meanes or an other.

3. *The poore to pill:* They make a prey of the poore by pilling them.

39.

Alas, God ordained neuer ſuch lawe,
Ne no ſuch craft of couetiſe;
He forbad it by his ſawe,
Such gouernours mowen of God agriſe,
For all his rules is right wiſe,
Theſe new points ben papall,
All Gods lawe they diſpiſe.
All ſuch faitours ſhul foule fall.

1. *Ne ſuch craft:* Such craftie couetouſneſſe: he forbad it by his word or ſaying.

2. *Such gouernours:* Such gouernours ought to bee afraide of God, or ſhall be grieued, and puniſhed by God.

3. *Theſe new points:* Theſe new lawes are wholy from the Pope.

They saine that Peter had the key,
Of heuen and hel, to haue and hold,
I trowe Peter tooke no money,
For no sinnes that he sold:
Such successours ben to bold,
In winning al their wit they wral,
Her conscience is waxen cold:
And al such faitours foule hem fali.

1. *Their wit they wrall*: They straine their wittes to the vttermost, to get all they can.

41.

Peter was neuer so great a fole
To leaue his key with such a lorell:
Or take such cursed soch a tole,
He was aduised nothing well.
I trowe they haue the key of hell,
Their master is of that place marshall,
For there they dressen hem to dwel:
And with false Lucifer there to fall.

1. *A Lorell*: Such a griper, and couetous careleſſe wretch.
2. *Or to take*: To commit such a *tole*, as the Key of heauen, to so cursed a wretch.
3. *He was aduised*: Hee had bin ill aduised, if hee had done so.

42.

They been as proud as Lucifarre,
As angry, and as enuious,
From good fayth they been full farre,
In couetise they been curious:
To catch cattle as couetous
As hound, that for hunger woll yall,
Vngodly, and vngracious,
And nedely such falshed shall foule fal.

1. *Good faith*: They are farre from plaine and true dealing.
2. *In couetise*: They are skilfull & craftie in couetousnesse.
3. *To couet cattaile*: As couetous to get goods as a hound, that cryes for hunger, is greedy to get his victuals.
4. *Nedely*: Necessarily, it cannot be, but such falsehood must speed ill.

The Pope and he were Peters heire.
Me thinke he erreth in this case:
When chose of bishops is in despaire
To chosen hem in diuers place:
A Lord shall write to him for grace,
For his clerke anone pray he shall,
So shall hee speed his purchase.
And all such false foule hem fall.

1. *The Pope and he were*: If the pope were *Peters* heire, yet me thinkes hee erres in this point, that when Bishopricks are voyde, and Bishops to be chosen, where it is doubtfull who shall speed, he will yeeld vpon some great

mans letter: without any further respect to the place or partie.

44.

Though he can doe no good,
A Lords praier shall be sped,
Though he be wild of will or wood,
Not vnderstanding what men han red:
A leud boster, and that God forbed.
As good a bishop is my horse ball:
Such a Pope is foule bested,
And at last he woll foule fall.

1. *Though he cannot*: Either the latter part of the sentence is left out, as if he would not for shame vtter it, though he knew no more what belongs to a Bishops office, then they, or else the meaning is, Though hee know nothing

belonging to the office of a Bishop.

2. *Wild of will*: A riotous lewd fellow, that hath no sway of himselfe.

3. *Not understanding*: Not being able to vnderstand what was read at his consecrating, enstalling, and election.

4. *That God forbed*: As if he would not name some speciall faults of his.

5. *Foule bested*: is at a bad passe for fitnesse to gouerne.

45.

He maketh bishops for earthly thanke,
And nothing at all for Christs sake:
Such that been full fat and ranke,
To soule heale none heed they take.
All is wel done what euer they make,
They shal answere at ones for all,
For worlds thanke such worch and wake.
And all such false shall foule fal.

1. *Such that been*: Such as are well fedde, and pampred, litle care for mens soules.

2. *All is wel done*: Whatsoeuer they doe is well done, but they shall answer one day for all.

3. *For worlds thanke*: Such men worke, and watch for worldly reward and praise.

Such

1. *Such as know not their Creede:* Shall be made prelats at mens entreatie.

Such that cannot say her Crede,
With praier shull be made prelates,

2. *Nother can the Gospell rede:* Such as cannot read the gospell, shall goueme in high places.

Nother can the Gospell rede,
Such shull now weld high estates.

3 *They toteth on her summe totall:*

The high Goods friendship hem makes:
They toteth on her summe totall,
Such bere the keyes of hell yates.
And such falce shal foule fall.

Their great riches get them friends.

Their summe totall: their large gifts, is the thing that is lookt after.

47.

1. *For they ben ordred:* for they are otherwise brought vp, from their childhood, then to suffer, trauaile, hunger, thirst, and colde, for Christs sake.

They forsake for Christs loue
Trauaile, hunger, thirst, and cold,
For they ben ordred ouer all aboue
Out of youth till they ben old.

2. *Hyred men:* I count all such hirelings. *Ioa.* 10. 1.

By the dore they goe not into the fold,
To helpe their sheepe they nought trauall,
Hired men all such I hold,
And all such false foule hem fall.

48.

1. *For Christ her King:* They will forsake Christ their King, and not know him, because of his pouertie.

For Christ her king they woll forsake,
And know him nought for his pouerte:
For Christs loue they wol wake,
And drinke piement and ale aparte.

2. *Pyement & ale:* Ale made of Wine and Hony sweete drinke.

Of God they seeme nothing aferd,
As lusty liueth, as did Lamual,
And driuen her sheepe into desert.
All such faitours shul foule fal.

3. *Aperte:* either for apert, openly, or else by themselues, when they are out of the sight of people, apart.

4. *Lamual:* Was one of the Knights of King *Arthurs* round table.

49.

1. *Christ*, had xii. Apostles, why shold *Peters* successour, be

Christ had xii. Apostles here,
Now say they, there may be but one,

That

That may not erre in no manere,
Who leueth not this ben loſt ech one,
Peter erred, ſo did not *Iohn*:
Why is he cleped the principall?
Chriſt cleped him *Peter*, but himſelfe the ſtone:
All falſe faitours foule hem fall.

thought free from error, more then the other Apoſtles ſucceſſors, ſince they themſelues were as free from erring as *Peter* was?

2. *VVho leueth not*: Who ſo beleeues not, that the Pope cannot erre, is caſt away, be he what he will.

3. *VVhy is he cleped*: Why ſhould *Peter* bee called the Prince of the Apoſtles, whereas he erred, and *Iohn* did not?

4. *Chriſt cleped him*: What though Chriſt called him *Peter*? he called himſelfe the Stone or Rock: he was *Peter*, that is *Stone*, as all true Chriſtians are liuing ſtones in Gods building, euery one in his place, and meaſure: but the corner ſtone, maine foundation, and Rock, is Chriſt onely.

50.

Why curſen they the croiſery
Chriſtes chriſten creatures?
For betweene hem is now enuy,
To be enhaunſed in honours.
And Chriſten liuers with her labours,
For they leuin on no man mortal,
Been do to death with diſhonours.
And allſuch falſe foule hem fal.

1. *VVhy curſen they*: Why do they accurſe them, for whom Chriſt dyed on the croſſe.

2. *Betweene hem*: Betwixt the Popes: two being choſen: or among the Cardinals, there is enuie, euery man deſiring to bee aduanced to honour.

3. *And chriſten liuers*: men that liue a Chriſtian life, both they and their workes or bookes, are done to death, deſtroyed with diſhonor, becauſe they will not beleeue in a mortall man, becauſe they will not reſt vpon the Pope, as one that cannot erre.

51.

What knoweth a tillour at the plow,
The Popes name, and what he hate?
His crede ſuffiſeth to him inow,
And knoweth a Cardinall by his hatte.
Thus is the pobre vnrightly latte,
That knoweth Chriſt his God royal,
Such matters be not worth a gnatte,
But ſuch falſe faitours foule hem fal.

1. *VVhat knoweth*: what knowes a ploughman, what the pope: *hatte*, hight, is called?

2. *Thus is the poore*: The poore are led out of the right way or Rough is the poore, that is the poore are counted rude, and ſaid to be miſled, though they indeed acknowledge Chriſt to be their Soueraigne God. See *par. 2. ſtaf. 3. annot. 5.*

A King ſhall kneele and kiſſe his ſhow:
Chriſt ſuffered a ſinfull to kiſſe his feete.
Me thinketh he holdeth him high ynow,
So Lucifer did, that high ſet.
Such one me thinketh himſelfe foryet,
Either to the trouth he was not call,
Chriſt that ſuffered wounds wete,
Shal make ſuch falſhed foule fall.

1 *Shrue*: Shoe.
2 *Sinfull*: Sinner.
3 *That high ſat*: That ſat on high.
2 *Such one himſelfe*: Such an one, mee thinkes forgets himſelfe, or elſe hee was neuer called to to the knowledge of the truth.

53.

They layeth out her large nettes
For to take ſiluer and gold:
Fillen coffers, and ſackes fettes,
There as they ſoules catch ſhold.
Her ſeruants be to them vnhold,
But they can doublen their rentall
To bigge hem caſtles, and bigge hem hold.
And all ſuch falſe foule hem fall.

1 *Layeth out*: They laye out or ſpred abroad.
2 *Sackes fettes*: perhaps Sacks and Fettes, that is, Fattes Dry-fattes, & other ſuch veſſels.
3 *There as they*: Where as they ſhould catch ſoules.
4 *Her ſeruants, be vnhold*: Their ſeruants are little beholden to them, or get little by them, are little eſteemed, vnleſſe they can finde meanes to double their Lords Reuenues, that they may buy them Caſtles and holdes.

Here endeth the firſt part of this tale, and hereafter followeth the ſecond.

1.

TO accorde with this worde fall,
No more Engliſh can I finde:
Shewe another now I ſhall,
For I haue much to ſay behinde:
How Prieſts han the people pinde,
As curteis Chriſt hath me kende,
And put this matter in my minde:
To make theſe manner men amend.

1 *To accord*: To agree in rime.
2 *Han*: Haue pin'd, ſtarued the people, not giuing the ſpirituall food.
3 *As curteis*: As Chriſt, who is meeke, and louing, hath taught me: *Kende*: made me know.

With

2.

Shortly to ſhend hem, and ſhew how
How wrongfully they werch and walke?
O hye God, nothing they tell, ne how,
But in Gods word tilleth many a balke:
In hernes hold hem and in halke,
And preachen of tithes and offrend,
And vntruly of the Goſpel talke.
For his mercy God it amend.

1 *Shortly to ſhend:* To take them vp ſhorte, to reproue them ſharply.

2 *O hye God:* I thinke it ſhould be, *of high God:* They tell nothing, they make no account of God on high, or they preach nothing of God: but the former ſenſe is the better.

3. *Ne how:* Neither care they how he thinke of their doings.

4. *Tilleth many a balke:* A balke is a greene ſlip or peece of ground, to deuide lands in the fields: the meaning is, they breake vp the limittes and bounds that God hath ſet in his word to keepe them in.

5 *Hernes and halke:* Corners and valleys: They keepe themſelues in places farre off from their flocks.

6 *And prechen:* And preachen of tithes and offrings: they doe not inſtruct the people in the word of God; but all their preaching is to make the people pay their tithes, and bring in offrings.

3.

What is Antichriſt to ſay?
But euen Chriſts aduerſarie:
Such hath now ben many a day,
To Chriſts bidding full contrarie,
That from the truth cleane varry,
Out of the way they ben wend,
And Chriſts people vntruly carry.
God for his pitie it amend,

1 *What is Antichriſt:* What is the ſignificatiō of Antichriſt, but Chriſts aduerſary? one that is an enemy to Chriſt, againſt Chriſt, it may alſo be expounded, inſteed of Chriſt, as the Pope calles himſelfe Chriſts Vicar, making a ſhew as if he were appointed to rule the church in Chriſts ſtead.

2 *Such hath now:* There haue bin ſuch now a long time, that behaue themſelues contrary to Chriſts commandements.

3 *That from the truth:* That goe aſtray from the truth.

4 *Out of the way:* They are gone out of the way.

5 *Vntruly carry:* they miſlead Chriſts people. *Latt:* Led out of the right way. *Pet. 1. ſtaf. 51 annot. 2.*

4.

They liuen contrary to Chriſts life,
In high pride againſt meekeneſſe,

1 *They liuen:* Now he ſhewes in particular, that

they are contrary to Christ.

Against suffraunce they vſen ſtrife,
And anger ayenſt ſoberneſſe,
Againſt wiſdome wilfulneſſe:
To Chriſts tales little tend,
Againſt meaſure outrageouſneſſe.
But when God wol it may amend.

2. *In high pride*: whereas Christ was lowly and meeke, they are proud and haughty.

3. *Against ſufferance*: He was patient and would beare any wrong, they are contentious.

4. *Soberneſſe*: Soberneſſe, is contrary to haſtineſſe in this place, meeknes we call it.

5. *Againſt wiſdome*: Christ carried himſelfe alwayes with diſcretion, reaſon, and temperatneſſe, theſe men runne wholy vpon their wilfull headineſſe.

6. *To Chriſts tales*: They little regarde Chriſts ſpeech and counſaile.

7. *Againſt meaſure*: Christ was moderate in his whole carriage, they are outragious in all their behauiour, yea euen to breake out into treaſon and blaſpheming, one pope throwes *Peters* Keyes into the water, becauſe he could not by them preuaile, as he would haue done, againſt the King of *France*: another caſts his breaden God into the fire, becauſe it would not anſwer him as an Oracle: a third will haue his peacock, a meate forbidden him by his phiſitions, in deſpight of God.

5.

Lordly life ayenſt lowlineſſe,
And demen all without mercie,
And couetiſe ayenſt largeſſe,
Againſt treweth trecherie:
And againſt almeſſe enuie,
Againſt Chriſt they comprehend,
For chaſtitie they maintaine lecherie,
God for his grace this amend.

1. *Lordly life*: Our Sauiour Chriſt liued in poore and meane eſtate: they liue like Lords.

2. *Demen all*: Iudge all men: or altogether without mercy.

3 *Ayenſt largeſſe*: Chriſt was bountifull; they couetous: *couetiſe*, couetouſneſſe: *largeſſe*, bountifulneſſe.

4 *Againſt almeſſe*: They enuie them, that haue any thing giuen to them; becauſe they would haue all for themſelues: each ſect of Friers, from others, and all from the ſecular Prieſts, & the prieſts all from them; as it hath bin apparant betwixt our prieſts and Ieſuites.

5 *Comprehend*: They take counſell againſt Chriſt.

6.

Againſt penaunce they vſe delights,
Againſt ſuffraunce ſtrong defence,
Ayenſt God they vſen euil rights,
Ayenſt pitie puniſhments:
Open euill ayenſt continence,
Her wicked winning they worſe diſpend,

1 *Ayenſt penance*: Whereas Christ would haue men to ſorrow for their ſinnes, they wallow in delights. penance of *penitentia*, repentance.

Sober-

Soberneſſe they ſette into diſpence.
But God for his goodneſſe it amend.

2 *Suffraunce:* they will defend themſelues, by force, rather then they will ſuffer.

3 *Ayenſt God:* They vſe euill customes against God:
4 *Open euill:* manifeſt villanies, inſtead of commendable.
5 *Her wicked winning:* That which is ill got, they ſpend worſe.
6 *Soberneſſe they ſet:* They diſpence with ſoberneſſe, taking libertie to riot.

7.

Why cleimen they wholy his powere,
And wranglen ayenſt all his heſts?
His liuing folow they nothing here,
But liuen worſe than witleſſe beeſts.
Of fiſh and fleſh they louen feeſts,
As lords they ben brode yknde,
Of Gods poore they haten geſts,
God for his mercy this amend.

1. *Why cleimen they:* Why doe they wholy claime chriſts power or authoritie, and yet wrangle against all his commandementes?

2. *His liuing:* They doe not follow his course of life at all, in this world, but liue worſe then vnreaſonable creatures, beaſts without vnderſtanding.

3 *Brode yknd:* They are knowne all abroade, as if they were Lords
4 *Of Gods poore:* They hate to haue any of Gods poore people for their gueſts: or they hate the geſts, *geſta*, the doings of Gods poore people: I like the former better.

8.

With Diues ſuch ſhal haue her dome,
That ſaine that they be Chriſtes friends,
And do nothing as they ſhould done:
All ſuch been falſer than ben fiends.
On the people they ley ſuch bends,
As God is in earth they han offend,
Succour fro ſuch Chriſt now ſend vs.
And for his mercy this amend.

1. *With Diues:* Such ſhall haue their iudgement with the rich man in the Goſpell. *Dives* in Latin ſignifies a rich man; it was not the proper name of any particular man, of whom that parable ſhould be made. in the Greeke πλούσιος, a rich man.

2. *On the peop'e:* They lay heauie burdens, or bonds on the people.
3 *As God is in earth:* They haue done what they liſt, as Gods on earth.
4 *Succour fro ſuch:* It ſhould be either, from ſuch, God ſend vs ſuccour: or defend vs, becauſe of ſuch, ſend's it muſt be for the time.

9

A token of Antichriſt they be,
His careckes ben now wide iknow.
Receiued to preach ſhal no man be

1 *His carectes:* His Characters or markes, be knowne now euery where.

Without token of him I trow.
Ech christen priest to preachen owe,
From God aboue they ben send,
Gods word to all folke for to show.
Sinfull man for to amend.

2 *Ech Christen:* Euery Christian priest ought to preach, as being sent from God.

10.

Christ sent the poore for to preach,
The royall rich he did not so:
Now dare no poore the people teach,
For Antichrist is ouer all her foe:
Among the people he more go,
He hath bidden all such suspend,
Some hath he hent, and thinketh yet mo,
But all this God may wel amend.

1 *Ouer all:* In all places: or, aboue all chiefly their foe.

2 *Among the people:* if he be a poore man, hee must bee accounted as a lay man; goe among the people, not among the Clergie.

3 *He hath:* The Pope hath commanded to suspend all such poore men.

4 *Some hath:* He hath layed hold on some, and thinkes to catch more of them.

11.

All they that han the world forsake,
And liuen lowly, as God bad,
Into her prison shullen be take,
Beten and bounden, and forth lad.
Hereof I rede no man be drad,
Christ said, his should be shend:
Ech man ought hereof be glad,
For God full well it woll amend.

1 *All they that han:* all those that haue forsaken the world, and liue lowlie as God commanded, shall be put into their prison, beaten, and bound, and carried away.

2 *I rede:* I aduise men not to be afraide of this, for Christ hath told vs, that his followers shall be shent, blamed and punisht.

12.

They take on hem royall powere,
And say they haue swerds two,
One curse to hell, one slee men here:
For at his taking Christ had no mo.
Yet *Peter* had one of tho,

1 *Swerds two:* They say, they haue two swords, with the one whereof, they curse men to hell, with the other they murder men

But

But Christ, to *Peter* smite gan defend,
And into the sheath bad put it tho.
And all such mischeues God amend.

here: the former is the spirituall sword: the other is the temporall.

2 *Yet Peter had:*

perhaps there wants (*but*) yet *Peter* had but one of those two swords: and Christ forbad him to smite with it, and bad him euen then when it seemed there was neede to fight, put it vp into his scaberd.

13.

Christ bad *Peter* keepe his sheepe,
And with his sword forbade him smite:
Swerd is no toole with sheepe to keepe,
But to shepheards that sheepe wol bite:
Me thinketh such shepheards ben to wite,
Ayen her sheepe with swerd that contend,
They driue her sheepe with great despite.
But all this God may well amend.

1 *Swerd:* a Sword is no toole to keepe sheep with.

Ben to wite are to blame, that is, worthy to be blamed.

5. *They driue:* They driue their sheepe with great anger, they rule them churlishly.

14.

So successours to *Peter* be they nought,
Whom Christ made cheefe pastoure,
A swerd no shepheard vsen ought,
But he would slea, as a butchoure.
For who so were *Peters* successoure,
Should bere his sheepe till his backe bend,
And shaddow hem from euery shoure.
And all this God may well amend.

1 *A swerd no shepheard:* No shepheard should vse a sword, vnlesse hee would kil the sheep, as a Butcher does.

15.

Successours to *Peter* ben these
In that, that *Peter* Christ forsooke,
That had leuer the loue of God lese,
Than a shepheard had to lese his hooke:
He culleth the sheepe as doth the Cooke
Of hem seeken the wooll to rend,
And falsely glose the Gospell booke.
God for his mercy them amend.

1 *He culleth the sheepe:* Hee takes holde, and imbraces the sheepe, as the Cookes does, to cut him in peeces: to rend the wooll of his back, when hee hath taken him.

2 *Falsely glose:* Falsely expound the Gospell:

After

16.

After Christ had take *Peter* the Kay,
Christ said, he must die for man:
That *Peter* to Christ gan withsay,
Christ bad him go behind Sathan:
Such counsailours many of these men han,
For worlds wele, God to offend
Peters successours they ben for than.
But all such God may wel amend.

1 *Had take Peter*: After Christ had giuen *Peter* the Key.

2 *Gan withsay*: In that matter *Peter* began to gainsay or withstand Christ.

3 *For worlds wele*: many of these men haue such counsellors, who will perswade them to sinne against God, for worldly commoditie.

4 *For then*: Then are they *Peters* successours, or for that, in that matter.

17.

For Sathan is to say no more,
But he that contrary to Christ is,
In this they learne *Peters* lore,
They sewen him when he did misse.
They follow *Peter* forsooth in this,
In al that Christ would *Peter* reprehend,
But not in that, that longeth to heuen blisse.
God for his mercy hem amend.

1 *Satan is to say*: Satan signifies no more but Christs aduersary, namely such an aduersary, as hates Christ: The word signifieth simply: a Hater or enemie.

2 *Lore*: Lesson, in this they learne of *Peter*, that they follow him in that wherein he did amisse.

3 *In al that*: They follow him wholy in all that Christ would reprehend him for: but in nothing that belongs to heauenly blessednesse.

18.

Some of the Apostles they sewen in case,
Of ought that I can vnderstond,
Him that betrayed Christ, *Iudas*,
That bare the purse in euery lond:
And all that he might set on hond,
He hidde and stale, and mispend,
His rule these traitors han in hond,
Almightie God hem all amend.

1 *They sewen in case*: They follow some of the Apostles indeed, namely as farre as I am able to conceiue, *Iudas* that betraied Christ.

2. *Might set on hond*: All that euer hee could by hand on, he hid stole and mispent.

3. *Han in hond*: These Traytors, haue his rule in their hand, follow his course,

And

19.

And at the last his lord gan tray,
Cursedly through his false couetise:
So would these traien him for money,
And they wisten in what wise.
They be seker of the selfe ensise,
From all soothnesse they ben strend,
And couetise changen with queintise.
Almighty God all such amend.

1. *Gan tray*: At last he came to betray his Lord, thorough his couetousnesse.

2 *Trayen him*: so would these men betray him for money, if they knew how to do it.

3 *They be seker*: They are surely of the very same assize, size, or measure, they are right of the same stampe.

4 *From all soothnesse*: They are strange, from all truth and plaine dealing: *strend*, strange.

5 *Couetise changen*. And colour their couetousnesse with deuises, making it seeme other then it is.

20.

Were Christ on earth here eftsoone,
These would damne him to die:
All his hestes they han fordone,
And saine his sawes ben heresie:
And ayenst his commandements they crie,
And damne all his to be brend,
For it liketh not hem such losengerie,
God almighty hem amend.

1. *Were Christ here*: if Christ were here againe vpon earth, these men would condemne him to death.

2. *All his hests*: They haue brok n and destroyed all his commandements, and say that his sawes, sayings, doctrines, are heresie.

3. *And damne all his*: They condemne all true beleeuers in him, to be burnt because such flattery as men vse, when they magnifie these false teachers, does not like these poore Christians: or because they like not such deceipts and errors, as they call the doctrine of the poore men. *Losengery*, deceit, flattery.

21.

These han more might in England here,
Than hath the King and all his lawe:
They han purchased hem such powere,
To taken hem whom list not knawe:
And say that heresie is her sawe.
And so to prison wol hem sende,
It was not so by elder dawe.
God for his mercy it amend.

1 *Whom list not know*: To take or apprehend them, whom they list not to approue or like of, and they condemne their doctrine for heresie.

2. *By elder dawe*: in former dayes or times.

1. *No man deme:* The Kings law will condemne no man in anger, before it haue heard him.

The Kings law wol no man deme,
Angerliche without answere:
But if any man these misqueme,
He shall be baighted as a bere:
And yet well worse they wol him tere,
And in prison woll him pend,
In giues, and in other gere.
When God woll, it may amend.

2 *Misqueme:* Displease, *to queme*, is to please.

3 *Vvell worse:* yea they will teare him worse then dogges doe a Beare.

4 *Him pend:* Pen say we now adayes, not pend: They will shut him vp in prison in fetters, and in such other bonds. *Gere*, is any thing put about to attire or holde.

23.

1 *Taxeth:* Setteth by Subsidies and fifteenes; *His men*, his subiects

2 *Raunsome hem:* Set them a summe to pay; as if they were ministers, and the people their slaues to be ransomed.

The King taxeth not his men,
But by assent of the comminalte:
But these ech yeare woll raunsome hem
Maisterfully, more than doth he.
Her seales by yeare better be,
Than is the Kings in extend,
Her officers han greater fee.
But this mischiefe God amend.

3 *Her seales:* Their seales in their courts and offices are more beneficiall to them, then the Kings seale is to him. *In extend*, at the vttermost extent of it.

24.

1 *Not all worth:* If any man will proue a Wil, though it be not worth ten pound in all, he shall pay fully the third part of the money for the writing and engrossing of it in their courts.

For who so will proue a Testament,
That is not all worth ten pound,
He shall pay for the parchement
The third of the money all round.
Thus the people is raunsound:
They say such part to hem should apend,
There as they gripen, it goeth to ground.
God for his mercy it amend.

2 *Raunsound:* raunsomd, made to pay as it were a ransome of sl nes.

3 *Apend:* Belong or accrew to them.

4 *There as they gripen:* Looke where they lay hold, they carry all away with them.

For

25.

For a simple fornication
Twenty shillings he shall pay,
And then haue an absolution,
And all the yere vsen it forth he may:
Thus they letten hem go astray,
They recke not though the soule be brend,
These keepen euill *Peters* Kay.
And all such shepheards God amend.

1 *All the yere,* If he haue paied 20, shillings, and taken out his absolution, he may play the whoremonger all the yeare after.

2 *They letten hem:* They let men runne into sinne, and neuer care though the poore soules burne for it, euerlastingly in hell fire.

26.

Wonder is, that the parliament
And all the Lords of this lond
Hereto taken so little entent,
To helpe the people out of her hond:
For they ben harder in their bond,
Worse beat, and bitter brend,
Than to the king is vnderstond.
God him helpe this to amend.

1 *So little entent:* It is wonder that the Parliament so little regardes this matter, to deliuer the people out of their clutches.

2 *For they ben:* For the poore people, are straightly bound, sorelier beaten, and more cruelly burned, then the King is aware of.

27.

What Bishops, what religious
Han in this land as much lay fee,
Lordships and possessions
More than Lords, it semeth me:
That maketh him lese charite:
They mowe not to God attende,
In earth they haue so high degre.
God for his mercy it amend.

1 *What Bishops:* Bishops and religious houses, haue more temporall possessions, then the Barons of the land haue. This was true of Popish Bishops, Abbeys & Frieries.

2 *Lese charitie.* They are so great in the world, that they loose their loue, and cannot attend vpon the seruice of God in their calling.

1 *Yafe the Pope:* The Emperor gaue the Pope heretofore ſo much authoritie ouer him, that poore man, as he was, at the laſt the proud Pope toke all from him.

2. *So of this Realme:* The like may be doubted of this Realme, if the Barons become not more wary, and looke better to the keeping downe of the Clergie.

The Emperour yafe the Pope ſometime,
So high Lordſhip him about,
That at laſt the ſilly kime
The proud Pope put him out.
So of this Realme is no dout:
But lordes beware, and them defend,
For now theſe folkes be wonders ſtout.
The King and Lords now this amend.

3 *Them defend:* Forbid, not ſuffer them to go forward in ſuch courſes.

Thus endeth the ſecond part of this tale, and hereafter followeth the third.

1 *Tho:* Then.

2. *No Lordſhips:* The Apoſtles were not ſo bold, as to take any ſuch gouernment vpon them.

3. *But ſmeren her ſhepe:* But to dreſſe and annoint their ſheepe, when they were ſore.

Moyſes lawe forbode it tho,
That prieſts ſhould no Lordſhips welde:
Chriſts goſpell biddeth alſo,
That they ſhould no Lordſhips helde.
Ne Chriſts Apoſtles were neuer ſo bold,
No ſuch Lordſhips to hem embrace,
But ſmeren her ſhepe, and kepe her ſold.
God amend hem for his grace.

2.

1 *Ne ben:* They are but counterfeit ſhepheards.

2 *In deſpite:* To thinke ſcorne of our Sauiours meane eſtate.

2 *Lite,* Litle.

4 *Nold nat demen:* They would not iudge according to the outward eſtate of men, with partialitie and accepting of perſons.

For they ne ben but counterfete,
Men may know hem by her fruite,
Her greatneſſe maketh hem God foryete,
And take his mekeneſſe in deſpite:
And they wer pore and had but lite,
They nold nat demen after the face,
But nouriſh her ſhepe, and hem not bite.
God amend hem for his grace.

What

What canst thou preach ayenst Chanons,
That men clepen seculere?
Peli. They ben curates of many tounes,
On earth they haue great powere:
They hane gret prebends and dere,
Some two or three, and some mo,
A persone to ben a playing fere,
And yet they serue the King also.

1 *Seculere:* All orders of the popish Clergie, are eyther regular, which liue by profession, seuered from the ordinary course of the world after a certaine rule, that their founder hath appointed, or secular which liue without any such restraint, *in seculo*, in the world, as other men commonly doe, the difference of calling excepted.

2 *To ben a playing fere:* Either he speakes in a iesting manner, as if they had their parsonages but for sport, not as a charge, or else he meanes, that their parsonages are bestowed on them, that they may be idle companions in hawking and hunting, and serue as iesters to make their patrons merry. *Fere*, companion.

4.

And let to ferme all that fare,
To whom that woll most giue therefore,
Some woll spend, and some woll spare,
And some woll lay it vp in store.
A cure of soule they care not fore,
So that they mowe much money take,
Whether her soules be wonne or lore.
Her profites they woll not forsake.

1 *Let to ferme:* Besides all this (saies the Ploughman) they become Chaplens to the King, & attend at the court, and ferme out those benefices and parsonages to him that will giue most for them.

2 *A cure of soule:* They care not for the charge of soules, they haue vndertaken, so they may get money.

3 *Wonne or lore:* Saued or lost.

5.

They haue a gadering procuratour,
That can the poore people emplede,
And robben hem as a rauinour,
And to his Lord the money lede,
And catch of quick and eke of dede,
And richen him, and his Lord eke
And to robbe can giue good rede,
Of olde and young, of hole and sicke.

1. *Gadering procurator:* a Proctor or Farmer to gather their tithes and duties, that can get out processe and sue the poore people.

2 *And robben hem as:* And rob them, like a rauening carmorant, & carry the money to his Lord or master.

3 *Catch of quick*: Get a fleece both of dead and liuing: by mortuaries & such like.
4 *Richen hem*: Enrich himselfe and his Lord.
5 *Giue good rede*: Can giue craftie counsaile to rob the poore, whatsoeuer they be.

6.

1 *Therewith they purchase*: With money thus gotten, they buy lands and leases, where they best like, and build great houses like Cities.
2. *Prest*, Redy.
3 *Ne no good*: They will giue nothing to the poore which are Gods guests.

Therewith they purchase hem lay fee
In londe, there hem liketh best,
And builde also brode as a cite,
Both in the East, and eke in the West:
To purchase thus they ben full prest,
But on the poore they woll nought spend:
Ne no good giue to Gods gest,
Ne send him some that all hath send.

7.

1 *By her seruice*: Such men will liue vpon their seruice at the court, or in Noblemens houses.
2 *And trusse that other*: And lay vp all the rest of their commings in.
3 *As a mirour*, Their life should be as a looking-glasse, to learned and vnlearned.

By her seruice such woll liue,
And trusse that other into treasure:
Though all her parish die vnshriue,
They woll not giue a Rose floure.
Her life should be as a mirour,
Both to lered and to leude also,
And teache the people her lele labour,
Suche mister men been all misgo.

1 *Her lele labour*: Their true labour, they should teach the people how to liue faithfully and painfully in their seuerall callings.
5 *Such mister men*: Such kinde of men are wholy out of the right way.

8.

1 *Hard nigges*: Some of them are miserable niggards: some proud and costly.
2. *Gigges*: Harlots and maintaine them gallantly.

Some of them been hard nigges,
And some of hem been proud and gaie,
Some spend their goods vpon gigges,
And finden hem of great araie:
Alas, what thinke these men to saie,
That thus dispenden Gods good,
At the dreadfull domes day
Soche wreches shull be worse than wood.

Some

Some her churches neuer ne ſie,
Ne neuer o pennie, thider ne ſend,
Though the poore pariſhens for hunger die,
O pennie on hem woll they not ſpend:
Haue they receiuing of the rent,
They recke neuer of the remenaunt,
Alas, the deuill hath cleane hem blent.
Soche one is Sathanas ſoiournaunt.

1 *Neuer ne ſie*: Some neuer ſee their Churches, whereof they are parſons, nor ſend one penny thether for releefe of the poore pariſhioners.

2 *Haue they*: So they may haue the tithes and commodities, they neuer care, what become of the people, either for their ſoules or bodies.

3 *Blent*, blinded. *Soche one*: Such men, are Satans gueſts, or ſoiourneurs and dwellers with Satan, his iourneymen or ſeruants.

10.

And vſen horedome and harlottrie,
Couetiſe, pompe, and pride.
Slothe, wrath, and eke enuie,
And ſewen ſinne by euery ſide.
Alas, where thinke ſuch tabide:
How woell they accompts yelde,
From high God they mowe hem not hide.
Soche willers witte is not worth a nelde.

1 *Sewen ſinne*: Follow ſinne by all meanes.

2 *Mowe hem, not hide*; They may not hide themſelues from God on high.

3 *Soche willers witte*: The witte of ſuch wilfull or wily men, is not worth a needle.

11.

They ben ſo rooted in richeſſes,
That Chriſtes pouert is foryet.
Serued with ſo many meſſes,
Hem thinketh that Manna is no meat.
All is good that they mowen geat,
They wene to liue euermore,
But when God at dome is ſeat,
Soch treaſour is a feble ſtore.

1 *Pouert is forget*: Chriſts pouertie is forgotten.

2 *Hem thinketh*: They thinke *Manna* no meate: the word of God.

3 *At dome is ſet*, When God ſhall ſit in iudgement.

12.

Vnneth mote they Matins ſaie
For counting and courtholding:
And yet he iangleth as a Iaie,
And vnderſtont himſelfe nothing.

1 *Vnneth: eth*, is eaſie: hardly haue they leaſure to ſay mattins.

2 *For his finding and his fee:* For meat and drinke, and wages, and lay vp his tithes and offrings.

He woll serue both Erle and King,
For his finding and his fee,
And hide his tithing and his offring,
This is a feeble charite.

13.

Other they been proude, or couetous,
Or they been hard, or hungrie:
Or they ben liberall, or lecherous,
Or els medlers with marchandry:
Or mainteiners of men with mastry,
Or stewards, countours, or pleadours,
And serue God in Ypocrisie:
Such Priests been Christs false traitours.

1 *Medlers with marchandry:* Dealers in marchandize.

2 *With maistry:* Vpholders of men to doe wrong by their power.

14

They been false, they been vengeable,
And begilen men in Christs name:
They been vnstedfast and vnstable,
To traie her Lord, hem thinketh no shame,
To serue God they been full lame,
Gods theeues, and falsely steale,
And falsely Gods word defame:
In winning is her worlds weale.

1 *Vengeable:* Giuen to seeke reuenge.

2 *In christs name:* Vnder shew of religion.

3 *Gods theeues:* Theeues vnder pretẽce of seruing God.

4 *In winning:* their felicitie is in getting worldly wealth.

15.

Antichrist these serue all,
I pray thee who may say nay?
With Antichrist such shull fall,
They followen him in deed and faie:
They seruen him in rich array,
To serue Christ such falsely fain,
Why, at the dreadfull domes day
Shull they not followe him to pain?

1 *In deed & say,* In their workes and faith, or they follow him precisely.

2. *Falsely faine:* They make a false shew of following Christ.

That

That knowen hem ſelfe that they doen ill,
Ayenſt Chriſts commaundement,
And amend hem neuer ne will,
But ſerue ſathan by one aſſent:
Who ſaieth ſothe he ſhall be ſhent,
Or ſpeaketh ayenſt her falſe liuing:
Who ſo well liueth ſhall be brent,
For ſoche been greater than the king.

17.

Popes, Biſhops, and Cardinals,
Chanons, Parſons, and Vicare
In Gods ſeruice I trowe been fals,
That Sacraments ſellen here:
And been as proude as Lucifere,
Eche man looke whether that I lie,
Who ſo ſpeaketh ayenſt her powere,
It ſhall be holden hereſie.

18.

Looke how many orders take,
Onely of Chriſt, for his ſeruice,
That the worlds goods forſake:
Who ſo taketh orders otherwiſe.
I trowe that they ſhall ſore agriſe,
For all the gloſe that they conne.
All ſewen not this aſſiſe,
In euill time they thus begonne.

1. *Sore agriſe:* Shall pay deare for ſo doing, be ſorely puniſht.

2 *For all the gloſe,* How faire a colour ſoeuer, they can ſet on the matter, if they follow not this rule, to take orders for Chriſts ſeruice, they begun in an euill houre.

19.

Looke how many emong hem all,
Holden not this hie waie,
With Antichriſt they ſhullen fall:
For they wullen God betraie.
God amend them that beſt may:
For many men they maken ſhende,

1. *Maken ſhend:* They make many men doe amiſſe.

2 *They weten well:* They know the truth well enough, but the diuell hath blinded them.

They weten well the sothe I say.
But the deuill hath foule hem blende.

20.

Some on her Churches dwell
Apparailed poorely, proud of port:
The seuen sacraments they doen sell,
In cattell catching is her comfort:
Of eche matter they wollen mell,
To doen hem wrong is her disport,
To afraie the people they been fell,
And hold hem lower than doeth the Lord.

1. *Some on churches*: Some of them will dwell vpō their benefices, going in meane apparell, but with proud carriage.
2. *In cattell catching*: All their felicitie, is in getting goods.
3. *Of eche matter*: They will medle in euery matter that may bring them gaine.
4. *And doen hem*: It is a sport to them to doe men wrong.
5. *To afraie the people*: They are cruell to keepe the people in awe, and hold them in greater subiection, then the Lord of the mannor doth.

21.

For the tithing of a Ducke
Or of an Apple, or an Aie,
They make men swere vpon a boke,
Thus they foulen Christs saie.
Soche bearen euill heauen kaie:
They mowen assoile, they mowe shriue,
With mens wiues strongly plaie,
With true tillers sturte and striue,

1. *An aye*: An Egge.
2. *They foulen*: They staine and disgrace the faith and religion of Christ.
3. *Bearen euill*: Such men are bad keepers of the key of heauen.
4. *With true tillers*: They are able, and wont to scuffle and contend with lusty strong Ploughmen.
5. *Strongly*: Being idle & ful fed, they haue lusty strong bodies, to abuse mens wiues.

22.

At the wrastling, and at the wake.
And chiefe chauntours at the nale,
Market beaters, and medling make,
Hoppen and houten with heue and hale:
At faire fresh, and at wine stale:
Dine and drinke, and make debate:
The seuen sacraments set at saile,
How kepe soche the kaies of heauen gate?

1. *The wake*: The towne feast.
2. *Chiefe chauntours*: They can sing merily. *At the nale*: At the meetings & drinkings of Ale: wakes, and Ales, are knowne.
3. *Hoppen, and houten*: leaping, and shouting, haling and pulling.
4. *At faire fresh*: I thinke it should be flesh, at good meate, and stale drinke.

Mens

23.

Mens wiues they wollen hold,
And though that they been right sorie,
To speake they shull not be so bold,
For sompning to the Consistorie:
And make hem saie mouth I lie,
Though they it sawe with her eye,
His lemman holden openly,
No man so hardy to aske why.

1. *Mens wiues?* They will keepe mens wiues, and though their husbands be neuer so much grieued at it, yet they shall not dare to speake of it, for feare of being summoned.

24.

He woll haue tithing and offring,
Maugre whosoeuer it grutch:
And twise on the day he woll sing,
Gods priests nere none soche.
He mote on hunting with dogge and bich,
And blowen his horne, and crien hey,
And sorcerie vsen as a Witch.
Such kepen euill *Peters* key.

1. *Maugre*: malgre, in spight of any that shall grutch at them.

2. *He mote on hunting*: Hee must hunt with dogge & bitch.

25.

Yet they mote haue some stocke or stone,
Gaily painted, and proudly dight,
To maken men leuen vpon,
And say that it is full of might:
About such men set vp great light,
Other soche stockes shall stand thereby,
As darke as it were midnight,
For it may make no mastrie.

1. *To maken men leuen*: They must haue some idoll, to make men beleeue on, that is to trust to, for spirituall & corporall helpe & safetie; and tell them that it is full of power, able to doe them any good, they shall desire.

2. *About such men*: men set vp goodly lights, burning Tapers, before such mamets and puppits, whereas other stocks, idols of the same kinde, shall stand by in a corner as darke as midnight, because forsooth it skils not whether people see them or no.

26.

That it leud people see mow,
Thou Mary, thou worchest wonder things:
About that, that men offren to now,
Hongen broches, ouches, and rings.

1. *Thou Mary*: it is the Virgin *Mary*, that workes wonders, about her they hang Brooches, Iewels, Rings,

all which come to the Priests share, but he wil offer nothing himselfe.

The prieſt purchaſeth the offerings,
But he nill offer to none Image:
Woe is the ſoule that he for ſings,
That preacheth for ſoche a pilgrimage.

2. *Woe is the ſoule:* Wretched, and in a miſerable caſe is the ſoule, that ſuch a prieſt ſings maſſes, dirges, or trentalls for, who cares for nothing, but the offrings of the pilgrims.

27.

To men and women that been poore,
That been Chriſtes awne likeneſſe
Men ſhullen offer at her doore,
That ſuffre hunger and diſtreſſe:
And to ſoche Images offer leſſe,
That mow not feele thurſt ne cold,
The poore in ſpirit gan Chriſt bleſſe.
Therefore oft'eth to feeble and old.

1 *The poore in ſpirit:* Chriſt bleſſed them, that were poore in ſpirit.

28.

Bucklers brode, and ſweardes long
Baudrike, with baſelardes kene,
Soche toles about her necke they hong:
With Antichriſt ſoche prieſts been.
Vpon her deeds it is well ſeen
Whom they ſeruen, whom they honouren,
Antichriſts they been clene,
And Gods goods falſely deuouren.

1. *Baudrick with baſelards:* A ſword, girdle, and hangers, with ſharpe daggers

2. *Vpon her deeds.* It is well ſeene by their doings, whom they ſerue.

3. *Clene,* Wholy, vtterly: They are Antichriſts ſeruants and conſume the maintenance which is appointed for Gods ſeruice, like *Bells* prieſts.

29.

Of Scarlet and greene gaie gounes,
That mote bee ſhape of the newe:
To clippen and kiſſen they counten in tounes,
The damoſels that to the daunce ſewe.
Cutted clothes to ſhew her hewe,
With long pikes on her ſhone,
Our Gods Goſpell is not true,
Either they ſeruen the deuill or none.

1. *Mote be ſhape:* That muſt bee cut after the new faſhiõ.

2. *Counten in tounes:* They make accompt to kiſſe, & embrace the wenches that come to the daunſings in the townes neere about them.

3. *Cutted clothes:*

They

They will haue their clothes short to shew their properneſſe.

4. *Long pykes*: Shooes with long sharpe tops, turning vp pikedly.

5 *Our Gods people*: The Gospell of God is not true, or else these men serue the diuell or no body.

30.

Now been Prieſts pokes ſo wide,
That men muſt enlarge the veſtiment:
The holy Goſpell they doen hide,
For they contrarien in raiment,
Soche prieſts of Lucifer been ſent,
Like conquerours they been araied,
The proude pendaunts at her ars is ipent.
Falſely the trueth they han betraied.

1. *Prieſts pokes*: Their caſtockes and gownes are ſo bigge and wide, that pariſhoners muſt make their maſſing garments larger then ordinary.

2. *They contrarien in raiment*: In their attire they doe contrary the goſpell,

which findes fault with the broad phylacteries and hems of the *Poar ſes* garments.

3 *The proud pendaunts*: Their coſtly ſilken whoods, and ſuch like, hang downe to their hammes.

31.

Shrift ſilver ſuch wollen aske's
And woll men crepe to the crouche
None of the Sacraments ſaue askes
Without mede ſhall no man touch:
On her Biſhop their warrant vouch,
That is lawe of the decre:
With mede and money thus they mouch.
And this they ſain is charite.

1. *Aske's*: Aske vs.
2. *Crouch*: croſſe.
3. *Askes*: Aſhes:
4. *Mede*: reward.

No man ſhall touch any of the Sacraments, ſaue onely holy Aſhes, vnleſſe he pay well for them.

5. *On her Biſhop*: They warrant theſe

their doings by their Biſhops, who ſay, that it is ſo in the decrees.

6. *Mouch*: Take vp all, eate vp all.

32.

In the middes of her Maſſe
They nill haue no man but for hire:
And full ſhortly let forth paſſe,
Such ſhull men find in each ſhire,
That Parſonages for profite deſire,
To liue in liking and in luſts:
I dare not ſaine, *Sans oſe ie dire*,
That ſuch been Antichriſts prieſts.

1. *In the middes of her Maſſe*: They will make commemoration of none in their Maſſe, but ſuch as pay them well for it, and that but in a word neither.

2. *In liking*: To liue as they liſt in pleaſures.

3. *I dare*

1. *I dare not saine*: I dare not say, without craving pardon for my speech, or leaue to say so: That such are Antichrists Priests.

33.

1. *Or they yef*: Either they must giue the Bishop *why*, pay him for it, or else they must reteine to him, and then they may continue their lewd life.

Or they yef the bishops why,
Or they mote been in his seruice:
And holden forth her harlotry,
Such prelates been of feeble empriſe.
Of Gods grame such men agriſe,
For such matters that taken mede:
How they excuſe hem, and in what wiſe,
Me thinketh they ought greatly drede.

2. *Feeble empriſe*: of litle worth.

3. *Of Gods grame*: Such men are vexed, that God should be angry with them for so doing; or such men shall be punished by Gods anger against them.

4. *How they excuſe them*: They should be afraide, how they may be able to excuſe themselues.

34.

1. *To no man longeth*: It is not for any man to finde fault with them.

2. *Fongeth*: They take Gods goods: the treasure of the Church and poore.

They saine that it to no man longeth
To reproue them though they erre:
But falsely Gods goods they fongeth,
And therewith meintein wo and werre.
Her deeds should be as bright as sterre,
Her liuing leud mans light:
They say the Pope may not erre,
Nedes must that passe mans might.

35.

1. *And tellen his fellow*: So each of them confesses himselfe to other, and all is well againe.

2. *His bird*: His bride or wench stayes at his lodging.

3. *For hee would winne*: Hee sings his masse, to get him some money.

Though a priest lie with his lēman all night,
And tellen his fellow, and he him,
He goth to Masse anon right,
And saieth he singeth out of sinne:
His birde abideth him at his Inne,
And dighteth his diner the meanse while,
He singeth his Masse for he would winne,
And so he weneth God begile.

Hem

Hem thinketh long till they be met,
And that they vsen forth all the yere,
Emong the folke whan he is set,
He holdeth no man halfe his pere:
Of the Bishop he hath powere
To foile men, or els they been lore,
His absolution may them skere,
And wo is the soule that he singeth for.

1. *That they vsen:* This is their custome all the yeare long.
2. *Lore:* Lost, cast away, damned.
3. *Skere:* of skare, to make afraid; but the sense will not beare it, for absolution doth not fright men, but rather free them from feare: What if we take it for cleare? as if it came of skowring?

37.

The Griffon began for to threte,
And saied, of Monkes canst thou ought?
The Pellican said, they been full grete,
And in this world much wo hath wrought,
Saint *Benet*, that her order brought,
Ne made hem neuer on such manere,
I trowe it came neuer in his thought,
That they should vse so great powere.

38.

That a man should a Monke Lord call,
Ne serue on knees, as a King:
He is as proud as prince in pall,
In meat, and drinke, and all thing:
Some wearen mitre and ring,
With double Worsted well ydight,
With royall meat and rich drinke,
And rideth on a courser as a Knight.

39.

With hawke and with hounds eke,
With brooches or ouches on his hood:
Some say no Masse in all a weeke;
Of deinties is her most food.

1. *With Lordships:* Hauing authoritie, & rule ouer Lordships, & bondmē: as 3. verses after,

They

To haue Lordship of man ne toune.

They haue Lordships and bondmen:
This is a royall religion.
Saint *Benet* made neuer none of hem
To haue lordship of man ne toun.

40.

Now they ben queint and curious,
With fine cloth clad, and serued cleane;
Proud, angrie, and enuious,
Mallice is much that they meane.
In catching, craftie and couetous,
Lordly they liuen in great liking,
This liuing is not religious,
According to *Benet* in his liuing.

1. *Queint*: daintie, and neate.

2. *Mallice is much*: most of their deuises and imaginations are malitious.

41.

They ben clerkes, her courts they ouersee,
Her poore tenaunce fully they flite:
The higher that a man amerced be,
The gladlier they wooll it write:
This is farre from Christs powery,
For all with couetise they endite,
On the poore they haue no pitty,
Ne neuer hem cherish, but euer hem bite.

1. *Her poore tenannt*: They fleete, take of the Creame of their poore tenants: that is, they lick the fatte from their tenants beards, taking away the best of their estate.

2. *The higher that a man*: the greater fine a man is set at.

42.

And commonly such been comen
Of poore people, and of hem begete,
That this perfection han inomen,
Her fathers riden not but on her fete,
And trauailen sore for that they eate,
In pouert liueth yong and old?
Her fathers suffreth drought and weate,
Many hungrie meales, thurst, and cold.

1. *That this perfection*: For the most part these men that haue vndertaken this state of perfection, for so the monkish state is counted in popery, are poore mens childrē.

2. *Inomen*, taken of *Nimen* to take, we vse it now, for stealing, taking by stealth.

And

And all this these Monkes han forsake,
For Christs loue and saint *Benete*:
To pride and ease haue hem take,
This religion is euill beseate:
Had they been out of religion,
They must haue hanged at the plowe,
Threshing and diking fro toune to toune
With some meat, and not halfe ynowe.

1. *All this:* Drought, wete, hunger, thirst, cold, the monkes haue forsaken for Christs sake.

2. *Hanged at the Plowe:* As it were laggering wearily after the Plough.

3. *Plough:* enough, as before in the prologue.

44.

Therefore they han this all forsake,
And taken to riches, pride and ease:
Full few for God woll Monkes hem make,
Little is such order for to praise:
Saint *Benet* ordained it not so,
But bad hem be churchliche,
In churchliche manner liue and go,
Boistous in earth, and not lordliche.

1. *Churchliche:* Churchlike, in the last editions of *Chaucer*.

2. *Churliche:* Churlike, vse rude, and courte meate, and apparell.

3. *Boistous:* homely and hard.

45.

They disclaunder Saint *Benet*,
Therefore they haue his holy curse:
Saint *Benet* with hem neuer met,
But if they thought to robbe his purse.
I can no more hereof tell,
But they ben like tho before,
And cleane serue the deuill of hell,
And ben his treasure and his store.

1. *Tho before:* They are like the B.B, and Priests I spake of before.

46.

And all such other counterfaitours,
Chanons, Canons, and such disguised,

1. *A Creede:* Some thinke hee means the questions

of *Jack-vpland*, or perhaps *Pierce Ploughmans* Creede. For *Chaucer* speakes this in the person of the Pellican, not in his owne person.

Been Gods enemies and traitours,
His true religion han foule despised.
Of Freres I haue told before
In a making of a Crede,
And yet I could tell worse and more,
But men would werien it to rede.

2. *Men would werie*: Would be wearie.

47.

As Gods goodnesse no man tell might,
Write ne speake, ne thinken thought,
So her falshed, and her vnright,
May no man tell that euer God wrought.
The Griffon said, thou canst no good,
Thou came neuer of no gentle kind,
Other I trowe thou waxest wood,
Or els thou hast lost thy mind.

1. *As Gods goodnesse*: as no man can vtter or conceiue, how great the goodnesse or vertue of God is, so is it vnpossible for any mortall man, to recount all their falsehood, their vniust and wicked courses.

48.

Should holy church haue no heede?
Who should be her gouernaile?
Who should her rule, who should her reede?
Who should her forthren, who should auaile?
Each man shall liue by his trauaile,
Who best doeth, shall haue most mede:
With strength if men the church assaile,
With strength men must defend her nede.

1. *Heed*: Head.
2. *Gouernaile*: Gouernour.
3. *Reede*: Aduise, direct.
4. *Her nede*: Either, must needs defend her, or must defend her affaires.

49.

And the Pope were purely poore,
Needie, and nothing ne had,
He should be driuen from doore to doore,
The wicked of him nolde not be drad.
Of such an head men would be sad,

And

And ſinfully liuen as hem luſt:
With ſtrength to amend ſuch be made,
With wepen Wolues from ſheepe be wuſt.

1. *VVuſt*: Wolues are to be driuen or kept from hurting the ſheepe with weapons.

50.

If the Pope and Prelates would
So begge, and bid, bow, and borrow,
Holy church ſhould ſtand full cold,
Her ſeruants ſit and ſowe ſorrow:
And they were noughtie foule and horow,
To worſhip God men would wlate;
Both on euen and on morow
Such harlotrie men would hate.

1. *And they were noughtie*: If they were naſty, filthie and ſluttiſh.
2. *VVlate*: Loath.
3. *Such harlotry*: Such beggerlineſſe.

51.

Therefore men of holy church,
Should be honeſt in all thing,
Worſhipfully Gods workes werch.
So ſeemeth it to ſerue Chriſt her king
In honeſt and in cleane clothing,
With veſſels of gold and clothes rich,
To God honeſtly to make offring:
To his Lordſhip none is liche.

1. *Honeſt*: Cleanly, handſome, and neate, as afterward, *in honeſt and cleane clothing*.
2. *So ſeemeth it*: It beſeemes them, or it is ſeemely ſo to ſerue Chriſt.
3. *To his Lordſhip*: None is comparable to God, in maieſtie, and authoritie, and therefore he is to bee ſerued with all the ſtate and pompe that may be.

52.

The Pellican caſt an huge crie,
And ſaid, alas, why ſayeſt thou ſo:
Chriſt is our head that ſitteth on hie,
Heads ne ought we haue no mo:
We ben his members both alſo,

1. *Caſt an huge crye*: Cryed out mainly.
2. *Heads ne ought*: We ought to haue no more heads but Chriſt.

3. *All*: All of vs both Clergie and Laiety, are his members.

4. *Als*: Also, or perhaps alone.

And father he taught vs to call him als,
Maisters to be called defended he tho:
All other Maisters ben wicked and fals,

5. *Defended*: Forbad vs to be called maisters: namely, as that men should depend vpon any minister, farther then according as he can proue, that he deliuers by Scripture, to be the word of God.

53.

1. *That taketh maistrie*: All, that take such authoritie vpon them, as from him.

2. *viz.*: all that challenge priuiledge not to erre, or depend vpon a man, as if he could not erre, are wicked teachers, and false.

That taketh maistrie in his name,
Ghostly, and for yearthly good:
Kings and lords should lordship haue,
And rule the people with mild mood.
Christ for vs that shed his blood
Bad his priests no maistership haue,
Ne carke not for cloth ne food,
From euery mischiefe he will hem saue.

2. *Bad his Priests*: Commaunded his Priests, to take no such authoritie vpon them.

54.

1. *Her riche clothing*: Righteousnesse shall be their rich clothing.

2. *Her vessell*: Their plate, and their ornaments of houses, shall be a cleane conscience.

Her rich clothing shall be rightwisnesse,
Her treasure true life shall be:
Charity shall be her richesse,
Her Lordship shall be vnite:
Hope in God her honeste,
Her vessell cleane conscience,
Poore in spirit, and humilite,
Shall be holy churches defence.

55.

1. *With her liue*: What hast thou to doe with their liues.

2. *No cattell gete*: Because thou canst get no goods, but liuest here and there.

What saied the Griffon, may thee griue,
That other folkes faren wele?
What hast thou to doen with her liue?
The falshed ech man may fele.
For thou canst no cattell gete,

But

But liueſt in lond as a lorell,
With gloſing getteſt thou thy mete?
So fareth the deuill that wonneth in hell.

3. *Wonneth*: Abideth, going vp and downe in hell.

56.

He would that ech man there ſhould dwell:
For he liueth in cleane enuie,
So with the tales that thou doeſt tell,
Thou wouldeſt other people deſtrie
With your gloſe, and your hereſie:
For ye can liue no better life,
But cleane in Hypocriſie,
And bringeſt thee in woe and ſtrife.

1. *In cleane enuie*: Becauſe he is altogether enuious, nothing but enuie.

2. *For ye can liue*: Becauſe you cannot get any better meanes of liuing.

3. *And bringeſt thee*: And thou Pelican bringeſt thy ſelfe into trouble and miſery.

57.

And therewith haue not to doen,
For ye ne haue here no cure:
Ye ſerue the Deuill, neither God ne man,
And he ſhall pay you your hire.
For ye woll fare well at feaſtes,
And warme clothed for the cold,
Therefore ye gloſe Goddes heeſtes,
And begile the people young and old.

1. *And therewith*: And yet you haue nothing to doe with the matters you medle in, becauſe you haue no charge here in the world.

2. *Ye gloſe Gods beſts*: yee falſely expound Gods commaundements.

58.

And all the ſeauen Sacraments
Ye ſpeake ayenſt, as ye were ſlie:
Ayenſt tithings, offrings, and tents,
And our Lords body falſely lie.
And all this ye doen to liue in eaſe,
As who ſaith, there been none ſoche:
And ſain the Pope is not worth a peaſe,
To make the people ayen him groche.

1. *As ye were ſlie*: As if you were wiſe, and all other fooles.

2. *With your entents*: With your vnderſtandings and interpretations.

3. *And our Lords body*: And falſely deny the reall preſence that Chriſt is bodily preſent.

1. *And this commeth in*: And all this is done by the diuels procurement, to set Christian people together by the eares.

2. *Spend in good*: Let them spend it prodigally, or lay it vp niggardly.

3. *Nist, ne wist*: Thou knowest not other mens consciences.

And this commeth in by fendes
To bring the christen in distaunce:
For they would that no man were frends.
Leaue thy chattring with mischaunce:
If thou liue well, what wilt thou more?
Let other men liue as hem list,
Spend in good, or keepe in store:
Other mens conscience neuer thou nist.

60.

Ye han no cure to answere fore:
What meddle ye, that han not to doen?
Let men liue as they han doen yore,
For thou shalt answere for no man.
The Pellican sayd, sir, nate,
I dispised not the Pope:
Ne no Sacrament, soth to saie,
But speake in charite and God hope,

1. *Yore*: Of yore: in former times, heretofore.

61.

But I dispise her hye pride,
Her richesse, that should be poore in spirit:
Her wickednesse is knowne so wide,
They serue God in false habite:
And tournen mekenesse into pride,
And lowlinesse into high degree,
And Gods words turne and hide,
And that am I moued by charite,

1. *And that am I moued*: And to that am I moued by charitie, to hinder men from liuing in such sort.

62.

To let men to liue so,
With all my cunning and my might.

1. *With all my cunning and might*: and to giue men

And

And to warne men of her wo,
And to tellen him trouth and right,
The Sacraments be ſoule heale,
If they been vſed in good vſe,
Ayenſt that ſpeake I neuer a deale:
For then were I nothing wiſe.

warning of the miſerable eſtate they are like to fall into.

63.

But they that vſen hem in miſſe manere,
Or ſet hem vp to any ſale,
I trow they ſhall abie hem dere,
This is my reaſon, this is my tale:
Who ſo taketh hem vnrightfulliche
Ayenſt the ten commaundements,
Or by gloſe wrechedliche
Selleth any of the Sacraments.

1. *They that vſen hem:* They that vſe the Sacraments amiſſe, or ſet them to ſale.
2. *Or by gloſe:* Or colourably vnder a faire pretence ſels them.

64.

I trow they doe the deuill homage,
In that they weten they doe wrong:
And thereto I dare well wage,
They ſeruen Sathan for all her ſong.
To tithen and offren is holeſome life,
So it be done in due mannere:
A man to houſelin, and to ſhriue,
Wedding, and all the other in fere,

1. *In that they weten:* Becauſe they know they doe amiſſe.
2. *A man to houſelin:* It is a good thing for a man to be houſeled, annointed, and ſhriuen.
3. *Wedding and all the other in fere:* mariage, and all the other Sacraments are good, ſo they be not bought and ſold for money.

65.

So it be nother ſold ne bought:
Ne take ne giue for couetiſe:
And it be ſo taken, it is nought,
Who ſelleth hem ſo, may ſore agriſe,

1. *May ſore agriſe:* Either ſhould pay for it: or elſe it is a kinde of curſing.

On

2. *His flesh and blood in Chawter saw* somewhat, though not all: it is no easie matter to leaue errors that we haue bin nousled in.

On our Lords body I doe not lie,
I say sooth through true rede,
His flesh and blood through his mysterie
Is there, in the forme of brede:

66.

1. *How it is there:* We need not striue in what manner it is there, whether as the subiect: in which those qualities of whitnesse, roundnesse, &c. do rest, or otherwise.

2. *As Christ was:* Christ is there as he was, when he liued.

How it is there, it needeth not striue,
Whether it be subget or accident,
But as Christ was, when he was on liue,
So is he there verament:
If Pope or Cardinall liue good liue,
As Christ commaunded in his Gospell,
Ayenst that woll I not striue:
But me thinketh they liue not well.

3. *Verament:* Certainly, and so he is indeed, but not bodily: Sacramentally in a mysterie, spiritually.

67.

1. *As God bedde:* If the Pope liued as God hath commanded, men should liue.

2. *Hanged by the swire:* By the halse, by the neck; or cragge.

For if the Pope liued as God bedde,
Pride and highnesse he should despise,
Richesse, couetise, and croune on hedde,
Meekenesse and pouerte he should vse.
The Griffon said he should abie:
Thou shall be brent in balefull fire,
And all thy sect I shall destrie,
Ye shall be hanged by the swire.

68.

1. *And to drawe:* you shall bee hanged and drawne in peeces

2. *Dissenered:* excommunicated, put out of holy Church.

Ye shullen be hanged and to draw,
Who giueth you leaue to preach
Or speake against Gods law,
And the people thus falsely teach?
Thou shalt be cursed with booke and bell,

And

And disseuered from holy church,
And cleane ydamned into hell,
Otherwise but ye woll worch.

3. *Otherwise but yee*: Vnlesse you take an other course, worke otherwise.

69.

The Pellican said, that I ne drede,
Your cursing is of little value.
Of God I hope to haue my mede,
For it is falshed that ye sewe.
For ye been out of charite,
And wilneth vengeaunce, as did *Neto*:
To suffren I woll ready be,
I drede not that thou canst do,

70.

Christ bad ones suffer for his loue:
And so he taught all his seruaunts,
And but thou amend for his sake aboue,
I drede not all thy maintenance.
For if I drede the worlds hate,
Me thinketh I were little to praise:
I drede nothing your high estate,
Ne I drede not your disease.

1. *Christ bad ones*: Christ commanded his, or *ones*, for once Christ once bad.
2. *All thy maintenance*: Threatning or power to hurt.
3. *Your disease*: I am not afraide of any hurt or disease, you cā procure me: disease is not here for sicknesse, but for any trouble or hurt.

71.

Wold ye tourne and leaue your pride,
Your high port, and your richesse,
Your cursing should not go so wide,
God bring you into rightwisenesse:
For I drede not your tyrannie,
For nothing that ye can done,
To suffer I am all readie,
Siker I recke neuer how soone.

1. *Vvold you tourne*: if you would repent and leaue your pride, your cursings would not fall out so contrary to your entent, whereas now they proue blessings.
2. *Siker I recke*: Surely I care not how soone.

1. *Euery doule*: Euery deale or peece, he would teare him in peeces.

The Griffon grinned as he were wood,
And looked lowly as an Owle,
And swore by cocks heart blood,
He would him teare euery doule:
Holy church thou dischundrest foule,
For thy reasons I woll thee all to rase,
And make thy flesh to rot and moule,
Losell, thou shalt haue hard grace.

2. *To rot and moule*: I will cast out thy carcasse, to lye rotting and moulding aboue ground.

2. *Losell thou shalt*: Wretch thou shalt haue much and great misery.

73.

1. *Heard, and ytaken keepe*: Oh that some good Christian, had heard and marked what hath past here in speech.

The Griffon flew forth on his way.
The Pellican did sit and weepe,
And to himselfe he gan say:
God would that any of Christs sheepe
Had heard, and ytaken keepe
Of each word that here said was,
And would it write and well it keepe:
God would it were all for his grace.

2. *God would it were*: I would God of his mercy would grant it were so.

74. *Plowman.*

I answerd, and saied I would,
If for my trauaile any man would pey:
Pelli. He saied yes, these that God han sold,
For they han store of money:
Plowman. I said, tell me and thou may,
Why tellest thou mens trespace?
Pellican. He said, to amend hem in good fay,
If God woll giue me any grace.

75.

1. *As fare be*: It is with him as it is with me.

For Christ himselfe is likened to me,
That for his people died on roode:

As

As fare I, right so fareth he,
Hee feedeth his birds with his blood,
But these doen euill ayenst good,
And ben his foen vnder friends face,
I told hem how her liuing stood,
God amend hem for his grace.

1. *Euill ayens good*: Either wherein they should doe good: or rather they requite Christs loue in shedding of his blood, very ill, in requitall of his goodnesse.

76. Plowman.

What aileth the Griffon, tell why
That he holdeth on the other side?
Pelli. For they two been likely,
And with her kinds rouen wide.
The foule betokeneth pride:
As Lucifer, that high flew was,
And sith he did him in euill hide:
For he agilted Gods grace.

1. *For they two*: the Pelicans speech should begin at this verse. Because they are alike, that is, the Griffon and the popish Clergie: & robbe and rauen euery where, by their kinde, or with their kindes rauin: they and their kinde are rauenous.

2 *That high flew was*: That was in high estate.

3 *And sith*: And afterwards fell to doe wickedly, and sinned against Gods mercy, either because he repined at the mercy, which God had determined to shew to mankinde, or for that he made light accompt of Gods mercy, in making him so glorious a creature, and would needs sore aboue his pitch.

77.

As bird flieth vp in the aire,
And liueth by birds that been meke:
So these been flow vp into despaire,
And shenden silly soules eke:
The soules that been in sinnes seke,
He culleth hem kneele: therefore alas,
For briberie Gods forbode breke:
God amend it for his grace.

1. *As bird flieth*: As these birds sore aloft, and liue vpon other silly ones: so these men are driuen out of all hope of saluation, and also *shenden*, hurt others, to make them in like estate to themselues.

2. *In sinnes seke*: The soules that are sick in sinne, they enforce so kneele downe to them for absolution.

3. *Alas*! more is the pitty.

4. *Gods forbode breke*: For bribery they doe that, which God hath forbidden.

78.

The hinder part is a Lioun,
A robber and a rauinere,

1 *In earth doune:* Here below vpon earth, as the fowles doe in the ayre.

That robbeth the people in earth doune,
And in earth holdeth none his pere:
So fareth this foule both ferce and nere,
And with temporell ſtrength the people chaſe,
As a Lion proud in earth here.
God amend hem for his grace.

79. *Pellican.*

1. *Daſed:* Amaſed, and out of heart.
2. *Had caſt to pull:* Hee had reſolued to pull, to ſpoile the Pelican.

He flew forth with his wings twaine,
All drouping, daſed, and dull:
But ſoone the Griffon came againe,
Of his foules the earth was full:
The Pellican he had caſt to pull,
So great a number neuer ſeene there was,
What manner of foules tellen I woll,
If God woll giue me of his grace.

80.

1. *Foules fele:* many, or fell, cruell, as before of Freres *par.* 1. *Staf.* 2.
2. *A graded wele:* Either well prouided, aſſembled, or, I know not what it meanes.
3. *I gurde:* Hie, They would ſoare aloft, that they might come through the foule: that is, that they might fall vpon the pelican, and ſtrike him through.
4. *Has for gard her grace:* This company hath the Griffon to guard him.

With the Griffon comen foules fele,
Rauins, Rokes, Crowes, and Pie,
Gray foules, agadred wele,
Igurde aboue they would hie:
Gledes and Buzzards weren hem by,
White moles and Puttockes token her place,
And Lapwings, that well conneth lie,
This fellowſhip han for gard her grace.

81.

Long the Pellican was out,
But at laſt he commeth againe:
And brought with him the Phenix ſtout,
The Griffon would haue ſlow full faine:
His foules that flewen as thicke as raine,

The

The Phenix tho began hem chace,
To flie from him it was in vaine,
For he did vengeaunce and no grace.

82.

He slew hem downe without mercie,
There astart neither free ne thrall,
On him they cast a rufull crie,
When the Griffon doun was fall:
He beat hem not, but slew hem all,
Whither he hem droue, no man may trace:
Vnder the earth me thought they yall,
Alas they had a feeble grace.

1. *Astart*: Escaped.
2. *Yall*. Went.

83.

The Pellican then axed I right,
For my writing if I haue blame,
Who woll for me fight or flight?
Who shall sheld me from shame?
He that had a maid to dame,
And the lambe that slaine was,
Shall sheld me from ghostly blame,
For earthly harme is Gods grace.

1. *Axed right*. Then did I directly aske the *Pelican*, or, right, forthwith.
2. *Fight or flight*: Flite, that is, plead, chide.
3. *To dame*: To his dame, mother: dame is mistresse, or Lady, now with vs.
4. *From ghostly blame*: From any spirituall hurt to my soule, for outward hurt that befalles a man in his body or state, is a blessing from God, and so it is certainly, when men suffer for righteousnesse: and indeed at all times to the children of God, to whom all things worke for the best. *Rom.* 8. 28.

84.

Therefore I pray euery man,
Of my writing haue me excused:
This writing writeth the Pellican,
That thus these people hath despised.
For I am fresh fully aduised,
I nill not maintaine his manace,
For the deuill is often disguised,
To bring a man to euill grace.

1. *Fresh fully aduised*: I am wholy resolu'd.
1. *I nill not*: I will not maintaine his threatning.
3. *To euill grace*: To bring a man into danger and trouble.

1. *Witeth*: Blame the Pellican.

2. *Heereof I nill not*: I will not ſtand to this, neither more nor leſſe.

3. *As a fable*: But yee muſt take it as a tale. *Chaucer* declineth the enuie, and auoydeth the rage of the Popiſh Cleargie, for his writing thus plainly and boldly.

Witeth the Pellican and not me,
For hereof I nill not auow;
In high ne in low, ne in no degree,
But as a fable take it ye mowe:
To holy church I will me bow,
Each man to amend him Chriſt ſend ſpace:
And for my writing me allow,
He that is almighty for his grace.

FINIS.

Errata.

*Par.*1. *ſtaf.*17. *l.*6. *read* crallit.
18. *l.*1. *r.* cleped.
28. *l.*8. *r.* falſe, right.
39. *l.*6. *r.* pure, papall.
43. *l.*3. *r.* choiſe.
*Par.*2. *ſtaf.*8. *l.*6. *r.* Godis.
28. *l.*5. *r.* in dout.
*Par.*3. *ſtaf.*29. *not* 5. *r.* Gods goſpell.
*ſtaf.*32. *not* 3. to ſay ſoe.